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The Centenary Edition.

THE COMPLETE WORKS

OF

SAINT ALPHONSUS DE LIGUORI,

DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH,

Bishop of Saint Agatha, and Founder of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN.

EDITED BY

REV. EUGENE GRIMM,

Priest of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

THE ASCETICAL WORKS.

Volume XXI.

LETTERS.

Volume IV.

PART II.

Special Correspondence.

THE APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION.

RÑDE PATER:

Memoriam gloriosi Congregationis SS. Redemptoris Fundatoris, centesimo, ab ejus obitu, adventante anno, pio et admodum opportuno consilio recolere aggressus es, dum omnia ipsius opera anglice vertenda, et typis edenda curasti. Summus itaque Pontifex, cui tum S. Doctoris exaltatio, tum fidelium utilitas summopere cordi est libentissime excepit 9 volumina huc usque edita, quæ Ei offerre voluisti. Ac dum meritas Tibi laudes de hac perutili tua cura præbet, et gratias de filiali oblatione agit, Benedictionem, quam tuis obsequentissimis litteris petiisti, Emi quoque archiepiscopi Baltimorensis commendationi obsecundans, ex intimo corde impertiit.

Hæc ad Te deferens fausta cuncta ac felicia a Domino Tibi adprecor.

Paternitatis Tuæ,

Addictissimus,

M. CARD. RAMPOLLA.

ROMAE, die 4 Junii, 1888.

TRANSLATION.

REVEREND FATHER:

As the centenary of the death of the illustrious Founder of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer drew near, you conceived the pious and appropriate plan of shedding a new lustre on his memory by translating all his works into English and publishing them. The Holy Father, therefore, who has at heart the spiritual advancement of the faithful, as well as the exaltation of the holy Doctor, has most graciously accepted the nine volumes thus far published, which you wished to present to him. While bestowing upon you well-deserved praise for your useful labor, and thanking you for the gift inspired by your filial love, he gives you from his heart the blessing which you humbly asked for in your letter, complying also with the request of the Most Rev. Archbishop of Baltimore.

As the bearer of this, I wish you all happiness in the Lord.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your obedient servant,

M. CARD. RAMPOLLA.

ROME, June 4, 1888.

The Centenary Edition.

LETTERS OF ST. ALPHONSUS MARIA DE LIGUORI,

DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH,

Bishop of Saint Agatha, and Founder of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN.

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REV. ARTHUR COUGHLAN,

Priest of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

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APPROBATION.

By virtue of the authority granted me by the Most Rev. Mathias Raus, Superior-General of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, I hereby sanction the publication of the work entitled "Letters", which is Vol. XXI. of the new and complete edition in English of the works of Saint Alphonsus de Liguori, called "The Centenary Edition".

FERDINAND A. LITZ, C. SS. R.,
Sup. Prov. Baltimorensis.

BALTIMORE, MD., *October* 27, 1895.

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PREFACE TO THE FRENCH EDITION.

THE *Special Correspondence* of St. Alphonsus contains the letters written by the holy Doctor in support of his System of Moral, as also those which he wrote for the direction of the printing of his works; under the same title are also included, the pastoral ordinances of the saintly Bishop and the principal documents relative to the government of his diocese. No longer is it the zealous Founder that speaks, no longer, the director of souls: but the writer, the theologian, the bishop. *Scientific letters*, *pastoral letters*, such is the natural division of this correspondence.

The term *scientific*, in its strictest sense, applies to but a small number of letters; we have thought fit, nevertheless, to designate by this title all those which relate to the writings of the saint. Very often, in fact, side by side with details of secondary value, these letters contain important remarks bearing on the very foundation of theology.

The greater number of the letters are addressed to Remondini, a celebrated Venetian publisher, whose editions were much sought after in the last century. Almighty God had his own ends in establishing relations so intimate between the holy Doctor and the famous publisher. Sound teaching might thus more easily be disseminated through Europe, and thence throughout the whole world. The government of Naples watched with jealous severity over all writings published within its domain. Venice, on the contrary, had, through its extensive commercial relations, thrown aside all national barriers and showed itself more lenient toward writers. This was a source of joy to St. Alphonsus.

Thanks to Remondini, the true doctrine crossed the Alps and went forth to combat innovators. Little by little, moral teaching, too lax or too severe, was replaced by doctrine more wise. The holy Doctor left nothing undone to secure for his books a revision which would enhance their value. Numberless and minute recommendations, frequent repetitions, assurances calculated to encourage Remondini and to dissipate his fears, every possible means did the saint employ for this end, and all with incomparable patience and constancy.

The reader will light upon many judgments on men and writings in the course of this correspondence. The literary life of the saintly Doctor is, we may say, portrayed therein under the form of a journal the most precise. All the works of the indefatigable writer appear in turn, sometimes, indeed, in a confused mass, piled, as it were, one upon another. The occasion that called them into existence, the time employed in their composition, the alterations and emendations introduced by the author, the attacks or the curious happenings to which they led, — all is recounted with simplicity and candor, and in the minutest detail. If the civil authority places the saint in embarrassment, Remondini is warned; if a certain book may not pass the Neapolitan frontiers, the publisher receives instructions concerning the matter; and should Remondini himself in certain cases need reassurance, the holy Doctor encourages him. Curiously enough, he even states to the publisher his own estimation of the works confided to Remondini for printing. In these judgments so instructive, however, self-love never blinds the writer. The man of God understood full well why he had chosen this or that subject, and why he had treated it in this or that manner. He has ever in view the salvation of souls; and for that reason he wishes to have his works read everywhere and by everyone. He varies his tone and his style according to the occasion, and learning is in his hands an instrument setting forth to advantage, not him who wields it, but the truth of which he is the humble servant.

The reader of the *scientific letters* will, undoubtedly, seek therein the history of the *Moral Theology* of St. Alphonsus; nor will he be disappointed. Indeed, no other work is so frequently mentioned. All the details relative to its composition, to its successive emendations, will be found treated most precisely in the correspondence. The letters on this subject, like all his correspondence, are written in the most simple style; however, interesting details abound. One may see in them what labor it cost the holy Doctor to bring to a conclusion the composition of this *Moral Theology*, his masterpiece, as it is commonly called. One may also see the persistency and firmness with which he maintained the fundamental doctrine, we mean the golden mean between Rigorism and Laxism, which the Church has so highly extolled. The motive of St. Alphonsus in defending his System so valiantly is worthy of his great soul. "I solemnly affirm," he says in his *Exposition of the Moral System, etc.*, "that all I have written on this matter, I have written, not to acquire a name for learning, but solely to procure the glory of God and the salvation of souls. If I have attacked authors who are too mild (and they have complained bitterly to me of the fact), my reason was that I could not bear to behold the barriers of Christian morality broken down by excessive liberty of opinion. If, on the other hand, I have written against authors that are too severe, it was because I could not bear to see consciences deceived and souls in danger of losing salvation by excessive severity. . . . My opinion, therefore, appears to me irrefutable." These grave words should be ever borne in mind. They alone explain the immense labors of the holy Doctor in the field of Moral Theology.

In conclusion: the perusal of the *scientific letters* will prove as edifying as that of the letters of spiritual guidance. We may even affirm, perhaps, that there exhales from them a perfume of sanctity and virtue more penetrating. Writers have, indeed, more than one stumbling-block to avoid, especially in their correspondence. But where find a simplicity, a candor equal to that of St. Alphonsus? Ever at

the breach, ever engaged in work, ever occupied with God, with souls, he gives no thought to himself. True, he endeavors to secure correct editions and such as will attract; though his sole purpose in attracting the reader is to win him to God. What does he care for his name or his portrait? His name he places at the head of his books, but merely from necessity; as for his portrait, the very mention of it fills him with horror. Humility and zeal run like a golden thread through this correspondence; love for the Church appears everywhere; reverence for the Pope shines forth with exceeding brilliancy; charity, that charity which occupies itself with the smallest details whenever there is question of a neighbor's good, is ever conspicuous. May we not affirm that defenders of the Church will find in these letters most useful counsels? The war declared against our faith in the eighteenth century would never have ensnared so many victims, had it not pressed into service that most popular form of writing, the small brochure. St. Alphonsus understood this perfectly well, and, in his apologetic writings, he aimed to condense in a small number of pages arguments the most unanswerable. Thus he pursued the enemy on every side, and, combating them with their own weapons, he was enabled more promptly to achieve the victory.

NOTE.— *Verità della Fede*, the title of one of the works of St. Alphonsus, has been erroneously translated *Truths of Faith*, it should be *Truth of Faith*.—TR.

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Special Correspondence.

I.

SCIENTIFIC LETTERS.

(1746 — 1771.)

LETTERS OF
ST. ALPHONSUS MARIA DE LIGUORI.

PART II.

Special Correspondence.

FIRST SERIES.—SCIENTIFIC LETTERS.

LETTER I.

To a Priest of Naples.

Reasons showing that it is not blasphemy to curse the dead.[1]

[1746.]

There can be no question here of the saints or of the souls in purgatory, since to curse these is always a mortal sin. But taking the words in their natural sense, they signify an imprecation uttered either against the reprobate (who are, indeed, dead, being deprived of true life), or against the mortal remains of the deceased. Now, how it can be called a mortal sin to say: Curses on the dead

[1] A curse against the dead, *Mannaggia i morti*, very much in use in the kingdom of Naples, had been regarded by some theologians, as a mortal sin. St. Alphonsus consulted many eminent missionaries of Naples on this point, and submitted to them the reasons which led him to embrace the opposite opinion. Afterward he published a lengthy dissertation on the subject, which won all over to his opinion. This fragmentary letter belongs to the discussion.

[*Mannaggia i morti*], meaning thereby either of these classes, is a thing I cannot comprehend.

2. According to the more rigid opinion, if the words uttered are of doubtful meaning, then that signification is to be given them which people in general accord them, even if the person who uses them does not intend to utter a grievous blasphemy, or to offend God grievously. The words uttered are a blasphemy, if the people hold them to be such. In many cases, I asked my penitents what they meant by these words and whether they had intended them to apply to the holy souls in purgatory or in heaven. They all answered: "God forbid! I meant simply the dead." This, then, is the meaning they attach to the words. All distinguish between the holy souls and the dead.

3. Blasphemies are blasphemies, either because everybody understands the expressions as such, or because they are intended as such by the one who utters them. But ask him who blasphemes the dead, if he meant to curse the holy souls in heaven or in purgatory, and he will answer you promptly: "No." Now, then, if the speaker and the hearer regard it in this light, where is the blasphemy?

4. All penitents express themselves clearly on the subject, and make a distinction between blaspheming the saints, blaspheming the souls in purgatory, and blaspheming the dead. For the penitent this last kind is altogether distinct from the other two; and I have learned from experience that those who have been guilty of blaspheming the souls in purgatory, accuse themselves of it with horror. After this, can any one say that this cursing of the dead is meant for the holy souls?

5. According to the opinion contrary to mine, there is no difference between these several curses in the Neapolitan dialect: *Mannaggia san N.; mannaggia le anime del purgatorio, e mannaggia i morti tuoi!* [Cursed be Saint N.!

Cursed be the souls in purgatory! Cursed be thy dead ones!] Every one knows how far this assertion is from the truth; and, for a fact, all, whether those who use such expressions, or those who hear them, believe that this cursing of the dead is altogether different from the cursing of the saints and the souls in purgatory.

6. Very many people, as you will have observed, when they accuse themselves of having cursed the dead, immediately add, that they intended thereby to curse the souls in purgatory.

7. By following the contrary opinion, the number of sins will be increased; for as soon as the idea that this cursing is a mortal sin, is fixed in the minds of the common people, they believe (as I have myself noticed) that it is a mortal sin to curse the dead, the animals, the rains, the winds, etc.

8. It is the duty of confessors to prevent sin. This they will do by following my opinion; for since this blasphemy has become so general, how sin would be multiplied, if it is taught that such blasphemy be a mortal sin! Why then should we not adopt and follow out in practice an opinion so much in accord with reason?

After an old copy.

LETTER 2.

To Mgr. Giuseppe Nicolai, Archbishop of Conza.

He dedicates the first edition of his *Moral* to this prelate.[1]

[1748.]

Si forsan opus aliquod hominum ingenio laboratum inveniatur, cui ad viri omnium virtutum genere præstantis auspicia, tanquam ad asylum, ut tute sustineatur, confugere opus

1 This dedication, which is equivalent to a real panegyric of the most worthy prelate, to whom it is directed, is found only at the beginning of this edition. We take pleasure in reproducing it here, because, being something pertaining to the saint, it should not be

sit; hoc certe hic liber, quem ego sum editurus, fore videtur. Cum enim super Busenbaum adnotationes contineat, vili apud nonnullos haberi opinor, qui, ut est natura hominum, novitiatum cupidi, si quæ admodum graphice sint a multis antea pertractata sapientibus, fastidiunt eadem, si a quovis repetentur. Qua de re non benigne acceptum iri mihi animus suggerit, nisi sub alicujus tutamine, qui nedum suis splendoribus, quod deficit ei lumen reddat, sed etiam ab aliorum vindicet injuriis, munitis circumferatur.

Ad cujus igitur, spe non fallaci innixus, confugiam, nisi ad tuum, Illustrissime Præsul, patrocinium? Tu enim tuis ornamentis, præcipuo quodam naturæ favore, et studii electione effecisti, ut iis, qui supersunt splendoribus, obscura quæque possis illustrare. Eo enim præclara tuorum procerum, et gesta tua Te perduxerunt, ut ad ea, quæ natura et virtus conjuratæ Tibi ministrarunt, nescirem quid laudis possit optari. Sive genus perquiratur tuum, sive Tu ipse in medium protraharis, tanto spectaberis honorum genere afflui, ut merito quisque ad Te, tanquam ad fontem concurrens, perenniter quid hauriat, invenisse gratuletur. Quis enim, sive in litteris versatus per annalium vetustatem, sive popularis et ex suffragatoribus, pervulgato præsentium fortunarum sermone, est qui nesciat tuæ familiæ perillustris amplitudinem? Ea nimirum est *Nicolai* familia, fama cujus jam abhinc quingentis et amplius annis, reddita est nobis celeberrima, quo tempore a Delphinatu (ubi ditione civili Arfevillæ dominabatur *Nicolaus Nicolai*,[1] a secretis, et geographus insignis regis Galliæ) Messanam, et inde Butuntum transvecta est, et diu inter Butuntinos nobiles tantis opibus valuit, quibus Carolum I Angio[2] pecuniis mutuo

lost; and also as a just tribute to Nicolai, who exerted himself so much for the foundation of our house of Caposele, of which the saint makes grateful and laudatory mention.

[1] Nicolaus Troppi *de origine Trib.*

[2] Blasius Altom. *de Fam. Petrarolo Molfettæ*, pag. 34.

locatis devinctum sibi reddere potuit. Tunc quoque temporis, inter Molfettæ primates feudorum dominus fuisse [1] *Franciscus Nicolai* memoratur.

At posterioribus sæculis non fortuna decidisse, imo instar fluminis incrementum ex itinere consecutos ad hæc nostra usque tempora eos, a quibus originem tuam non interruptam numeramus, inclytos legimus omnes vixisse. Hujusmodi dignoscuntur Joannes pater,[2] Joannes-Andreas filius, equites; et Joannes ille,[3] qui, ob singularem jurisprudentiæ laudem S. R. C. primariam gessit præturam. Et ne quid splendoris ex omni parte desideraretur, Franciscus, Joannis-Andreæ nepos,[4] et Octavius, bellica virtute, si quid deerat, compararunt; ambo Philippi II arma secuti: hic,[5] miles voluntarius, strenue cum certasset, ad proarchitalassi lauream pervenit; ille [6] ex primoribus militiæ titulis fulgens insignibus ad stationes Apuliæ littorum fuit destinatus. Emicuit fortunatus ille Petrus Paulus Soc. Jes., propatruus tuus,[7] qui, præsentato sibi Teatæ summo pestis discrimine, ægrotantium subsidio oblatus, victima factus caritatis se ipse Deo litavit, sæpe hæc repetens: *dignum sane est pœnis ad cœlum pervenire.*

Hisce accedunt ecclesiasticæ Dignitates,[8] ob quas duo patrui tui D. Cataldus, et alter D. Franciscus-Paulus celebres posteritati facti sunt; quorum alter in Cardinalis Gasoni aula munere fungebatur auditoris, et omnes causæ civiles de Ferrariæ legatione sibi, vices Eminentissimi in hoc gerenti, decidendæ referebantur; posterior, postquam in romanis Academiis singulari eruditione et omnigena

1 Franc. Lombardini in *Historia Molfettæ*, pag. 34.
2 Dux Guardiæ *in Fum. Visconte Tremblai.*
3 Not. Ant. *de Julianis Bitetti* sub die 9 nov. 1502.
4 Not. Ant. *Ferri Bitetti* sub die 3 septembr. 1529.
5 *Process. Benef. Nicolai dell' Olio in Archiv. Episc. Bitet.*
6 Not. Ant. *de Leonibus Bitet* in ann. 1607.
7 *Menolog. Patrign.* sub die 11 octob. ex Alegambe.
8 D. Joseph. Volpi, in *Chronolog. Episc. Caputaq.* n. 48.

doctrina admirabilis evasit, ad insignes Ecclesiæ gradus (ubique tamen, rebus gestis, pastorali vigilantia scriptisque se dignis monumenta sui reliquit) nimirum ad Canusitensem præposituram, hinc ad Caputaquensem episcopatum, et tandem ad Compsæ metropolim transcendit.

Nec silentio præteream propius consanguinitate Tibi conjunctos, D. Carolum amplissimum patrem tuum, Canneti marchionem, qui prudentia, doctrina et titulis æternitati nomen commendavit; et D. Dominicum, ornatissimum fratrem, præsentem Canneti marchionem, qui, nihil a majoribus degenerans, sed omnia honoris ac pietatis ornamenta in se uno colligens, conatus est ut, quanto honore ipse ex illorum dignitate afficeretur, non minora redderet ex sua laude; qua effecit, ut connubii vinculo D. Annæ-M. Federici ex nobilissimorum stirpe senatoria ac patricia genuensi, feminæ spectatissimæ se conjungendo, hujus familiæ gloriam et decora incremento suæ mancipasset. Et quamvis tui in tuam vixerint gloriam, et suis exemplis viam tibi ad virtutem paraverint, tamen, nisi animus Te fecisset nobilem, aliena non tua laudarentur: *Dignitas enim originis* (attestante S. Hilar.) *in operum consistit exemplis, et prosapiæ gloria fideli imitatione retinetur.* Neque tamen is es, qui natalium indiges suffragio, ut ad laudes proveharis. Neminem, qui Te noverit, morum integritas, irreprehensibilis actionum prudentia, liberalitas indicibilis, zelus ardens possunt fugere; imo hæc omnia omnibus comperta, et explorata jam sunt. Nam, si cunctam tuæ ab adolescentia retroactæ vitæ seriem repetamus, nullam possumus invenire partem, quæ in ecclesiasticis stipendiis laboribusque assiduis non sit exercita. Siquidem etiamdum ephebus Romam petisti, bonam scientiarum palæstram inter florentissimos totius Orbis adolescentes edocendus, et cum in celebri *Sapientiæ* academia operam navares, omnia ad orthodoxæ religionis præscriptum ita exegisti, ut totus litteris politioribus, theologicis doctrinis, sacris Canonibus, cæterisque

eruditioribus scientiis intentus, mente nunquam a cordis custodia abalienata, unice metuens et perhorrescens criminis labem, vitæ integritatem custodiveris. Inque patriam Te recepto, singulare illud fuit, cum in illa civitatis Petiliæ insigni Collegiata (ubi adhuc adolescens, licet invitus, primiceriatus honore fulgebas decoratus) luctuosi circa res Ecclesiæ exciti fuissent tumultus, inter tot tantosque sacerdotes, Tu quamquam ætate inferior, virtute tamen et animi magnitudine maximus, de medio surrexisti, putans tua referre et ope et zelo pro Ecclesiæ tuenda immunitate, serpentis prudentiam imitando, Te totum perditorum odiis tradere, modo Dei et Ecclesiæ jura sarta tecta servares. Hinc evangelicam Mnam gloriosius Te negotiatum, fel. rec. Clemens XII, hisce et multis aliis permotus meritis, ut vidit, super multas civitates Dei fore dignum potestate, de patruo tuo, jam longæva ætate non minus quam laboriosis archiepiscopatus curis confecto, et degravari quærente, in tuos humeros metropolis Compsæ onus sustinere valentes, duxit transferendum. Onus quippe angelicis humeris formidandum; sed, quia non sine prudentiæ miraculo demandatum tibi officium mirabiliter exples, maxime ob incredibilem gravitatis cum mansuetudine moderationem, leve tibi succedit. Et quoniam ea mente natura Te donavit, qua in curarum tanto oceano veluti obrutus, sed nunquam deficiens, ad omnia non minus intentus videris, ac si unicum et facile negotium esset archidiœcesis difficilis gubernatio. Hoc vero non vocibus, sed factis plane clarescet.

Si disciplina scilicet cleri spectetur, ad Religiosorum normam instituti videbuntur ecclesiastici: ab omnium illecebrarum otio remoti, quotidianis psalmodiis frequentes, cultui divino assidui; et, ut paucis comprehendam, aureum cleri sæculum advenisse credo. Hoc patefiat diligenti illa vigilantia, qua ex neapolitanis Congregationibus, et novissime ex nostra quoque, non semel ac iterum, sed sæpe sæpius accitis missionibus, nihil intentatum relinquens ad populum

in officio retinendum, credito gregi non intermisse prospicis. Quid, in corrigendis vitiorum fœditate contaminatis, vindex constans non agis? Nulli fuit adeo effrenata vecordia, nulli tanta temeritas, nulli tanta audaciæ insolentia, qui virgam virtutis tuæ non sensisset. Et, ut ad omnem diuturnitatem futuri temporis, gregis tui custodiæ provideres, nullis Te nostris moventibus meritis, dignatus es (ut ad rudes populos erudiendos oppida excurramus) domum nostræ Congregationis Caputsilere, uberrima census aureorum millium media donatione, maxima præter subsidia, quæ in dies ad ædificii constructionem ministras, firmissime in posterum stabiliendam curare. Neque prætermittendam puto, quam adhibuisti consilii maturitatem, in Sanctimonialium reformando monasterio, ubi, ut regularem observantiam, temporum injuria prope collapsam, impensis multis de tuo suppeditatis, cum laudabili vita perfecte communi, restaurares, ad eas concordes (opus sane difficile) in unam sententiam flectendas, laborasti et perfecisti. Neque ulla ætas conticescet, sed linguis omnium loquetur templa omnia diœcesis per Te vel restaurata, vel de novo erecta, vel tuis munificentissimis supellectilium largitionibus amplificata. At præ cæteris Basilica cathedralis bonam sortita est fortunam; etenim, ac si sensum haberet, indigne ferens, jam talem assecuta sponsum, incomtam et non pari decore ornatam se Tibi exhibere, cum terræmotu in secundo tui præsulatus anno funditus eversa esset, de infortuniis veluti gavisa est, spem certam concipiens decorius instauratam esse surrecturam. Hoc certe in tuum nisi incidisset pectus, quemvis in tot tantisque subitis calamitatibus, si non exanimasset, exterruisset saltem omnino. Tu autem validior infortuniis factus, impensarum contemptor, in conficiendo celerior, ad operam illico paratus, paucorum spatio annorum erexisti, ornasti, amplificasti. Prætermitto hic pretiosissimas pontificalium vestes, argentea altaris ornamenta, marmoreas aras, duas procathedrales magnifice refectas, duo archiepiscopia, quorum unum pene

a fundamentis renovatum, alterum ad speciosiorem modum redactum. Hoc unum, quod tuum proprium est, et in quo comites recusas, decantandum æstimo, quod, Tridentini inhærendo vestigiis, in Seminarii curam ea solertia incumbis, uti Tibi totam administrationem serves. Ducis enim, nihil Tibi gloriosius posse evenire, quam bonos adolescentes rite informatos ad munia ecclesiastica obeunda institui. Et ut valetudinis eorum æqua haberetur ratio, duo Seminaria, hiemale unum Sancti Mennæ, quod penitus terræmotu dirutum de novo magnis sumptibus erigi, et fines dilatari aggressus es; æstivum alterum Sancti Andreæ, quod ad formam quoque per Te est redactum, pro variis anni vicibus usui habes parata. Quid autem dicam de Seminarii disciplina? Si pietatem specto, ut exemplar multis, imo omnibus præponerem; si scientiarum palæstram, manifeste hoc convincit florentissimus ministrorum delectus, quos cum aliquando desiderio tuo pares non facile in diœcesi reperiebas, ex omni parte, stipendiis maximis operam compensando, convocabas. Reliquus campus patens occurrit, nimirum profusa in pauperes liberalitas, de qua quidquid dici potest nunquam factorum exæquabit conditionem. Satis ostendet, quam sis hoc in genere virtutis immoderatus, factum illud annorum superiorum, quod narratur: cum fames per provincias multas grassaretur, et pauperes ad tuam patris beneficentiam, ut tempestatibus vexati ad portum, concurrerent, ore tuo, ex præcordiis tamen eructatum, auditum fuit dici, venisse tempora, in quibus, si pecunia et quidquid annonæ repositum erat, deficerent, argentum arte laboratum (copiam cujus non mediocrem de paterna domo tuo usui traduxisti) si venumdari opus esset, ne pauperes destituerentur, libenter Te fuisse facturum. Quod certe rei exitus approbavit, cum singulis oppidis summam non modicam, tunc temporis distribuendam, quoquo locorum misisti, non ut ex importunis pauperum molestiis Te eximeres, sed potius ut alios arcesseres. Quapropter tibi gratulor, Compsæ, quæ

nihil quod invideas, habes, sed quod invidearis, multum; vere felix, quæ Pastorem in sortem obtinuisti, cui non oves lanas portant, sed qui ovibus propemodum consumendus traditur.

Quæ cum ita sint, quis mei facti rationem non laudabit? Sed ad hæc multo majora, et in me maxime præstantia accedunt, quæ jure merito hoc opus tuæ committendum fidei postulant. Namque sinceræ illæ humanitatis tuæ significationes, quibus Institutum nostræ Congregationis (cui immeritus præsum) bullis approbantibus mirifice amplexus es, omnem dubitationis suspicionem removent, quin officium observantiæ meæ sis accepturus; vel saltem hæc spes me consolabitur, quod, si ita nullam tuorum in me meritorum potero assequi partem paribus, studio tamen Tibi indulgendi ingrati vitii liberabor.

Accipe ergo, Illme Præsul, si merito tuo non æquale donum, saltem officii mei fidele testimonium: accipe, et tua, quæ est animi benignitas, compenset, ad quod meæ vires pervenire non possunt; expleatur tui animi magnitudo non iis, quæ et Tu mereris et ego velim, sed his quæ præstandi facultas est: noli donum respicere, sed meum, qui certe digna rependere cupio, donantis animum. Itaque Tu, qui non tam Tibi, quam aliis natus es, tuo patrocinio me, meosque foveas, humanitate complectaris, et ut incepisti protegas. Vale.

Humillim., obsequentiss. ac addictim. famulus

ALPHONSUS DE LIGORIO.

After the edition mentioned above.

LETTER 3.

To the Reader.

Preface to the above-mentioned edition.[1]

Vivat Jesus, Maria, Joseph!

[1748.]

Pluribus abhinc annis excogitavi tradere tyronibus nostræ minimæ Congregationis SS. Salvatoris librum, quo brevius et ordinatim in scientia Theologiæ Moralis tam difficili et animarum saluti necessaria sufficienter instituerentur. Plurimos relegi et perpendi auctores, quorum alios nimis redundantes, alios nimis contractos esse existimavi. Præ omnibus Busenbaum selegi, qui præclara methodo paucis omnia magis scitu necessaria colligens, non modicam suppellectilem parat. Attamen alia explicanda, alia addenda censui ex diversis probatorum DD. auctoritatibus, nimirum S. Thomæ, Lessii, Sanchez, Castropalai, Lugo, Layman, Bonacina, Viva, Croix, Roncaglia et aliorum; præsertim Salmanticensium, qui communi æstimatione moralem hanc scientiam diffuse et egregie pertractant; quosque ipse inter cæteros frequentius familiares habui: ita ut fere omnia, quæ iidem tot libris latiore calamo in examen revocant, breviter concinnata hic invenias, et præcipue quæ ad praxim faciunt. Textus quoque tum canonicos, tum civiles suis locis diligenter adnotavi. Atque ut juvenibus juxta finem mihi propositum apposite prodessem, ad modum captu faciliorem meas adnotationes adjungere studui; in hoc enim maxime sedulam operam dedi, ut potius in claritate, quam in sermonis elegantia abundarem. Meo judicio, tanquam minus sapiens dico, qui hunc librum attente præ manibus habu-

[1] We have thought fit to reproduce here this preface, which stands at the beginning of the first edition of the *Moral Theology*. It serves to acquaint us with the authors whom the saint selected for his guides in this difficult science.

erit, brevi tempore et labore plus quam satis in hac scientia instructus evadet. Aggrediamur igitur opus ad honorem et laudem D. N. Jesu Christi, Salvatoris nostri, et B. Virginis Mariæ sine labe conceptæ. Vale.

After the above-mentioned edition.

LETTER 4.

To Don Giuseppe Sparano, Canon of the Cathedral of Naples.

The saint gives his opinion with regard to absolving a cleric given to incontinence, who wishes to be promoted to Holy Orders.

Live Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and Teresa!

NOCERA, November 20 [1750].

My Dear Don Giuseppe: I have received your most gracious letter.

It has always been my opinion that, when a candidate for Holy Orders gives signs of a sincere and resolute will to amend and to employ the means necessary for that purpose, so that he can reasonably (according to the words of the Council of Trent[1]) hope with the assistance of God to lead a continent life, he has sufficient dispositions to receive absolution, just as he has to receive Holy Orders. The confessor should, without doubt, admonish him to defer a little, that he may try his strength; but if his penitent wishes to be promoted to Holy Orders, he cannot be denied absolution.

The arguments which Iorio[2] brings forward for the contrary opinion do not convince me, nor have they brought conviction to many learned men with whom I have conversed on this subject, and who are of the same opinion as myself. Moreover, I have found most cogent reasons in St. Thomas, which have confirmed me in my way of think-

[1] Council of Trent: *Speret, Deo auctore, posse se continere.*

[2] Don Giuseppe Iorio, a celebrated missionary.

ing. It would take too long to enumerate them here. I shall have sufficient opportunity of communicating them to you at Naples.

The fear of relapse does not destroy the real hope which the candidate may have, that, with the assistance of divine grace and especially the grace of the sacrament, he will preserve the chastity.

For the rest, if you now think differently from what you first told me, I do not hereby wish to influence or change your opinion. I only ask you to inform me in a genera! way of the authorities you have collected on this point, and especially of the teaching of St. Anselm which you mentioned to me, so that I may receive some light from them on the subject.[1] Live Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and Teresa!

I beg you to do me this favor. Tell [*some words are here missing in the copy*] when he can return to bring me the notes in question.

I have the honor to be, Dear Sir,

Your humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] Send me also the paper of Iorio about which you spoke to me.

After an old copy.

1 Having devoted more study and research to the question, the saint did find light, and shortly afterwards published a dissertation on the obligation of denying absolution to all such candidates for Holy Orders; and in all the subsequent editions of his *Moral Theology* he retracted his former opinion.

LETTER 5.

To the Sovereign Pontiff, Benedict XIV.

He dedicates the second edition of his *Moral* to the Pope.

[Nocera de' Pagani, 1753.]

Beatissimo ac Sanctissimo Patri Benedicto XIV Pontifici Maximo.

Alphonsus de Ligorio.

Tuæ dignitatis majestas, Beatissime Pater, doctrinæ atque eruditionis tuæ fastigium, ne Tibi hoc meum Opus morale, simpliciori ac prorsus humili stylo conscriptum, exhiberem, aut suadere me omnino, aut dubitantem deterrere magnopere debuissent; summa vero Sanctitatis tuæ benignitas ac ferventissimus zelus, qui in Te semper enituit, prius ut optimi præsulis singularum ecclesiarum partes absolveres, et deinde ut Summi universalis Ecclesiæ Pastoris muneri vigilantissime satisfaceres, me impulerunt ut hos tenues labores meos, quos nonnisi pro animarum salute suscipere et in publicam edere lucem constitui, Tibi libentissime dedicarem. Cum enim fuissem Dei beneficio vocatus ad missionum ministerium pro adjuvandis populis per rura dispersis, iisque potissimum qui spiritualibus magis destituuntur auxiliis, visa mihi ad hoc fuit necessaria scientia plus quam mediocris rerum moralium, quæ tum ad instruendas, tum ad regendas animas esset accommodata. Qua de re tam pro mea, quam pro Juvenum nostræ Sodalitatis intelligentia, opportunum duxi opiniones probabiliores utilioresque ad animarum salutem seligere. Cumque plurimis, per plures annos, relectis auctoribus tam benignæ quam rigidæ sententiæ, alios nimium benignitati indulgentes, alios nimium austeritati addictos comperissem, operæ pretium me facturum credidi, si librum ederem qui, mediam viam tenens, sententias magis veritati consonas magisque scitu necessarias

ad conscientias dirigendas exponeret, atque, hac accepta opportunitate, multa in eo ad praxim pertinentia, quæ sacrarum missionum exercitio didiceram, Fratribus meis committerem. Opus, Deo juvante, cœpi et absolvi, proponendo mihi pro doctrinarum exponendarum methodo *Medullam* P. Busenbai Soc. Jesu, et absolutum typis demandavi: quod cum universe fuerit acceptum rursusque debuerit publici juris fieri, in meliorem ordinem redegi, diligentius quibusdam doctrinis enucleatis, compluribus aliis adjectis, additisque insuper aliquibus dissertationibus de infallibilitate definitionum Pontificiarum, et de earumdem supra Concilia superioritate.

At quia libri omnes, qui ex Theologiæ principiis Fidei ac morum controversias pertractant, Tibi soli debentur, qui et summus es Theologiæ princeps unusque Ecclesiæ moderator, divinæ veritatis conservator et vindex, unusque controversiarum judex ab ipso Deo, singulari providentia, ad hoc constitutus, prout dixit Maximianus episcopus Constantinopolitanus (*Epistol. ad Orientales*): "Omnes fines terræ, omnesque veram fidem profitentes in Romanorum Pontificum potentiam, tanquam in solem respicere, quem de cæteris mortalibus ex terrarum orbe Conditor orbis elegit, cui cathedram magisterii principaliter possidendam tenere perpetuo privilegii jure concessit, ut quisquis divinum aliquod, sive profundum nosse desiderat, ad hujus præceptionis oraculum doctrinamque recurrat."

Hinc juste hoc opus Tibi dicandum existimavi, eoque magis quod una ex præcipuis causis, quæ me ad illud edendum induxerunt, fuit, ut cognitas omnes haberent saluberrimas Bullas Epistolasque encyclicas tuas, quæ tantopere profuerunt et proderunt usque ad sæculorum consummationem universali morum reformationi cunctorum Fidelium; quandoquidem in eisdem Sanctitas Tua summa prudentia, neque ad nimium rigorem, neque ad nimiam benignitatem

declinans, sed temporum defectui condescendens, mira suavitate disposuit id quod cum ingenti animi fortitudine sibi proposuerat.

Fuit præterea mihi consilium plurimas in medium doctrinas proferre, quas ex aureis tuis operibus sum edoctus, quibusque Sanctitas Tua non pauca immortali recordatione digna atque ediscenda universæ reipublicæ litterariæ tradidit. Hæc enim tua grandis doctrinæ eminentia non minus quam reliquæ, quæ in Te elucent, virtutes, nempe morum integritas, admiranda a propinquis alienatio, prudentia singularis, incomparabilis salutis animarum zelus et Summo Sacerdotio apprime necessarius, Te Supremo Pontificatu dignissimum reddiderunt.

Demum, si librorum dedicationes solent testes esse grati animi ac non immemoris acceptorum ab aliquo magno principe beneficiorum, cum unus ipse sim ex Fratribus Congregationis SSmi Redemptoris, cui Tu nuper apostolicam auctoritatem benignissime accommodasti,[1] opportebat jure merito, ut Tibi uni hoc opus sisteretur, ac præterea nemini.

Tu igitur, Beatissime Pater, per illam, qua genus humanum complecteris, caritatem; per curam illam, quam christianis omnibus enixe et debes et præstas; per illum ipsum, cujus in terris vice fungeris, Jesum Christum, excipe pietate qua soles hoc qualecunque munusculum, quod Tibi sacro et præsento, ut modereris, corrigas, deleas, quidquid in eo veritati absonum visum fuerit, et si quid boni est, faveas et tuearis, paternaque ac apostolica benedictione tua prosequi non dedigneris tum opus ipsum, ut animarum prosit saluti, tum me sodalesque meos, ut in nostro ministerio divinæ gloriæ cooperantes, uberrimum in vinea Domini fructum reportare valeamus.

Nostrum autem erit jugiter Deo fundere preces, ut universo christiano orbi Sanctitatem Tuam diu servet incolumem, diuque in terris relinquat, quo tandem aliquando non

[1] February 25, 1749.

sine omnipotentis Dei præsidio catholicæ religionis hostes, omnesque a vera Fide aberrantes ad ovile Christi fideliumque cœtum, ad unicum salutis portum felicissime deducantur.[1]

After a printed page at the beginning of the second edition.

LETTER 6.

To Cardinal Antonio Sersale, Archbishop of Naples.

He gives his judgment on a work which had been submitted to him for examination. He praises the work highly.

[1755.]

Most Eminent and Most Reverend Sir: I thank your Eminence most sincerely for the honor you have done me in commanding me to express my opinion on the work entitled: *The Bishop Consoled.*[2] Fearing that I would be unequal to the task on account of my inability, I associated with myself one or other Father of my Congregation. And since by reason of the importance of the matter in hand, I should have a positive scruple did I not freely and candidly declare my opinion, which is the same as that of my confrères, I shall say in all sincerity that this little work is as admirable for its simplicity as for the numerous practical points which it contains, points unknown, perhaps, to many prelates.

It will, therefore, be a priceless boon to those who read

[1] How highly the Sovereign Pontiff esteemed the work dedicated to him, appears from two letters of His Holiness to the saint, given in vol. i. of *General Correspondence*, pps. 314 and 369.

[2] This work, published anonymously at Naples, in 1755, by Benedetto Gessari, is from the pen of Don Giuseppe Iorio, priest of the Congregation of Father Pavone, called also the *Conference*. Mention has been made of this zealous missionary in vol. i. of *General Correspondence*, page 329 (where in a note it is said by mistake that he belonged to the Congregation of the Archiepiscopate).

it with humility; for it is to the poor in spirit that the Lord communicates his greatest lights. He who, for his own high purposes, uses the lowly and retiring, has been pleased to act thus, also, with this unpretentious work. The wisest of the world, had they pondered ever so long, would not have found out so many ways of cultivating neglected dioceses as are suggested in this little book. It is evident, therefore, that the hand of God guided the author in his task for the encouragement of so many bishops who are disheartened by the innumerable obstacles they encounter. If many of the works that it suggests, cannot be carried out in some cities or countries, they may be done in others with the greatest facility. On reading this book, my companions and I (and we have, indeed, a practical acquaintance with dioceses) are of one mind in saying, that should any one contemn it, either on account of the simplicity of its style or the number of suggestions that it makes, and which may not be practicable for every locality, he would betray his little experience in apostolic work, as well as his meagre knowledge of the variety of style.

But your Eminence, also, has read this work, and you must have seen that the proper style for such a work is the very one the author adopted. In regard to the matters dealt with, your prudence and experience, no less than your zeal, will have understood that they are all of practical value; and that to the bishop it belongs to discern by his prudence what may be done in one place and what in another.

In conclusion, I feel bound to say that every bishop should look upon the present work as a treasure, for it is not a compilation from books, but the fruit of prayer and long experience.

This, too, I understand, has been the opinion of the most enlightened and distinguished Fathers of the Congregation of Pious Workers of Naples, who have unanimously

accorded the highest praise to this little work, and have said what I myself here humbly express to your Eminence.

Prostrate at your feet, I implore your paternal benediction.

Your most humble, devoted, and obedient servant and subject,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,
of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After a sheet printed at the beginning of the work.

LETTER 7.

To Don Giuseppe Iorio, a Priest of Naples.

The saint begs him to indicate in detail any addition he would like to make to one of his works; he alludes, also, to a work against the Reformers by an English Catholic.

Live Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and Teresa!

NOCERA, April 9. [1755?]

My Dear Don Giuseppe: I pray you, when you find leisure, to write to me all that you would wish to see added to the *Practice*,[1] but do not speak in terms so general, as: *this point needs more development; this is to dry*, and the like; because, if you write thus to me, I shall simply add nothing. You must state in detail, but succinctly, any changes or additions you may wish to see made.

Write everything on paper, even your former remarks; for during my absence, somebody mislaid the paper containing your former observations, and I have been unable to find it. Live Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and Teresa!

For your remarks follow the order of the book. It will not be necessary to send me everything at once. It will suffice to remit a little now and then. Live Jesus and Mary!

1 The work entitled *Practice of Confessors, etc.* published for the first time in 1748.

I have read the English work: *Reply to the Friends, etc.* [1] It was purchased by Don Gaetano di Geronimo, and I have already returned it to him. It is a good book, but not to my purpose. It attacks the Reformers, whilst I am writing against those who do not believe in the Gospel. [2] Live Jesus and Mary!

Your very humble servant,

ALFONSO,
of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original in the possession of his Excellency, Count Louis John Baptist Parr, ambassador of his Apostolic Majesty to the Holy See.

LETTER 8.

To Signor Giuseppe Remondini, Publisher at Venice.

This publisher being about to issue a new edition of the *Moral Theology*,[3] the saint promises his assistance.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

Convent of S. Michele, PAGANI. [August 1755?]

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received your most esteemed letter.

I am rejoiced to learn that you will print the work in folio and in clearer type. My companions and I shall do our utmost to make it a success; besides recommending it ourselves, we shall have it recommended on the missions, and also during the spiritual exercises which are given many

[1] "Reply to the Friends of the so-called Reformation, by a Christian Gentleman, a Convert to the Catholic Faith." Published in 1742, by Father Mainieri.

[2] He alludes to a work he was then writing: "Refutation of the Errors of Modern Infidels, called nowadays Materialists and Deists."

[3] The two preceding editions had been published at Naples, the first in 1748, by Alessio Pellecchia, the second in 1753–1755, by Giovanni di Simoni.

times every year in our houses to a great number of ecclesiastics.

In regard to my royalty, that will be entirely according to your good pleasure.

Rest assured that your edition will be much more valuable than those published at Naples, since not only will all mistakes be rectified, but the subject-matter will be classified in its proper order, and many little additions will be made. I have already arranged a good part of the work, as I wrote to you, but I wish to look over the whole once more, to see if there is still anything to improve.

This great task, however, I shall not be able to accomplish in a short time, nor can I possibly begin it at present, since the autumn missions are at hand, and my assistance will be especially required this year. In case, then, you should wish to begin the printing immediately, please let me know whether you would be satisfied were I to send you one half of the work in parts of, say, fifty sheets at a time. You would thus be enabled to go on with the printing, and I would have time to work more diligently in finishing the remainder of the book.

Tendering you my best wishes and placing myself at your disposal for any further service I may be able to render.—Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

I remain

Your devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA DE LIGUORI,

Rector Major,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 9.

To the Same.

He announces to the publisher that he is about to send the first volume of the *Moral Theology*, together with some manuscript additions, gives him some hints as to type and paper, and mentions what kind of theologian he desires as reviser of the work.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, February 15, 1756.

I take this opportunity of informing you that I am about to send on the work. I have just finished all the necessary arrangements.

I sent you a letter some time ago, which, I hope, you have received by this time. I pray you let me know immediately whether you have received it, as well as the present one together with the work. I should be very sorry were this latter to go astray, on account of the many little notes it contains, which cost me much trouble; for in them I have arranged in better form many opinions, besides adding to the work much useful teaching and information.

I am sure that had not my own edition [1] already met with a good sale (most of the copies are now sold), everybody would abandon mine and take yours.

I again repeat my desire that you request the person who revises the work, not to omit or abbreviate the new notes, since they form, perhaps, the best part of it. I am no longer at Benevento. I wrote to you from that place, because, having accepted a new foundation [2] there, I had to go thither to give a mission. I have written to learn what kind of booksellers they have there. I think there are not

[1] The Neapolitan edition.
[2] S. Angelo a Cupolo.

many, for it is a poor place for books. Very soon I may ask you to send me a list of the works you publish. I may easily have occasion to sell some of them.

I have already written to you (and I here repeat it in a few words) that La Croix is most frequently quoted in my work, he being the author I had continually at hand. As regards the work of Father Mazzotta, I assure you it does not contain the one-tenth part of my book. Moreover, I have quoted not only La Croix, but very often also this same Father Mazzotta,[1]

At the end of this letter I have placed some important remarks for the reviser, proof-reader, and compositor. Again, I recommend you not to give my book for revision to any theologian of the Rigorist School (such as are nowadays, for the most part, the Dominicans), for I am not of the opinion of that School. I hold a middle course. I would much prefer to have a Jesuit Father revise the work, if this could be done, for these Fathers are truly masters in Moral Theology. Indeed, the Jesuits of Naples are unanimous in publicly commending my book. Only a few have said that, in certain points, I am too rigorous. But, I repeat, the golden mean, or middle course, pleases me best.

1. Whatever is underlined, as quotations, etc., must be printed in italics.

2. It will be necessary to consult the notes I have added, and also to see that nothing is missing; for frequently the compositors take one line for another, and thus confusion arises. The quotations, also, must be verified by comparison with my manuscript. But if this comparing is not done by two persons, one reading the quotation itself, while another keeps the original before him, the mistakes in the numbers can never be discovered. This is of the utmost

1 Claude La Croix and Niccola Mazzotta, both of the Society of Jesus.

importance, as many books and publications have fallen into discredit for this very reason, that the citations were inexact. Having myself observed this fault in many books, I have taken pains to verify the quotations from authorities at their sources; and in the work of correcting I have discovered very many mistakes made by the compositor. Most earnestly do I recommend this matter to you.

3. You will observe that in the first index of general headings, as well as in the second of particular subjects, the pages of my book are frequently mentioned. Now, these pages, you will readily perceive, must all be changed so as to correspond with your edition. Of necessity, therefore, the indexes, the first as well as the second, will have to be printed last. There are, also, in the body of the work many references to preceding pages; these, too, must be made to correspond with your edition.

4. As to the punctuation, I beg you to request the reviser not to alter anything, because the changing or omitting of even a single period or comma gives rise to confusion, and the sense is not understood. On the other hand, some crowd their work with commas, and this, too, is a source of confusion. Besides, according to modern orthography, such frequent use of the comma is abolished. Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

Rector Major

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] After having written the above, I was informed that Signor Francesco Pitteri, while printing a French dictionary, used to send a single proof-sheet weekly to the author, Abbé Antonino, at Naples. Should you think it a good idea, you might do in like manner with my book,

sending the proofs to Signor Stasi.[1] I can recommend him to you; he is an acquaintance of mine. He would see to it that they would reach me. The corrections, being made by myself, would be more perfect, and the work would give greater satisfaction to the public. I insist on this point, because, for the correcting of the work, it will be necessary to have the assistance of some learned and experienced person who would pay close attention to the notes and additions that are contained in it. Now, I think that in Venice you will not easily find one to do this tedious work, and who would use greater diligence and care than I. Besides, since the book is being printed from a former edition, the pages and the references to them must be changed, and if one does not pay the closest attention, he will easily make mistakes. It will not be necessary for you to send the original manuscripts of the notes, as I already possess copies of them. You need only send the proofs. It would be well were you to have the first correction made at your place. I could then make the second, and they would be perfect. However, do as you think best. In making these suggestions, my only wish has been to benefit the work, and to increase the good name of your establishment as well as to win a greater sale for the book. I am even willing to pay the expenses incident to the carrying of the sheets you may send me. My work is completed and ready for you. I am only awaiting an opportunity when some of our booksellers will have occasion to send some packages of books to Venice; I will send mine with them. In all probability I shall despatch it with a package which the above-mentioned Signor Stasi has to send you.

I would, moreover, advise you to use good paper and clear type; for I have heard much dissatisfaction expressed

[1] A publisher at Naples.

that the *Theology* of Father Zaccaria [1] appeared on poor paper.

Please acknowledge the receipt of this letter, for I wrote another some time ago. [*Two sentences are here missing, owing to the torn condition of the original letter.*]

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER IO.

To the Same.

He acquaints him with the sending of the first volume of the *Theology*, and congratulates himself on the choice of a Jesuit for reviser.—Recommendations with regard to the printing of the work.

Live Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and Teresa!

NAPLES, March 30, 1756.

The letter that I received from you to-day has given me great joy; for, indeed, not having received any answer to the two I wrote you some time ago, I was in doubt whether I should send the book or not. Now I shall send it at once.

I had given it to Signor Stasi that he might send it with his package; but he writes to me that you have directed him to forward it in a closed box to Signor Matteo Ernan-

[1] Francesco Antonio Zaccaria, of the Society of Jesus, was one of the most talented and industrious writers of the eighteenth century (1712–1786). His printed works number one hundred and six. With admirable zeal he defended the prerogatives of the Holy See, and his *Anti-Febronius* was universally read, as was also his apology for it, entitled: *Anti-Febronius vindicatus* in 4 vols. octavo. He waged relentless war against the Probabiliorists and Jansenists. We owe, also, to Father Zaccaria an edition of Busenbaum, of La Croix, a great number of *Dissertationes* and *Opuscula*, and several liturgical works of very high value.

dez in Manfredonia. I will obey your wishes in the matter, since your letter has arrived in time.

For the present I send you the first volume only. You may put it up in whatever form appears best to you. Meantime, I shall give my attention to the arranging of the second volume, to which I shall add many important notes, taken mostly from Father Zaccaria's recently published edition of La Croix.

I hope that, through Signor Matteo Ernandez, the work will reach you safe. I beg you as soon as you receive it, to inform me of the fact through the above-mentioned Signor Stasi, for I should be very sorry did the book go astray, since, as you will perceive, it has caused me great trouble to arrange it.

It has given me much pleasure to know that you will confide the revision to a Jesuit Father, for were you to choose one of the Dominican Fathers, who at present follow Father Concina, he would censure as lax many opinions which I have advocated. You know that, as a general rule, I adhere to the teaching of the Jesuits (not of the Dominicans), and their opinions are neither lax nor rigorous, but rather the golden mean. And if I do maintain one or the other rigorous opinion against some Jesuit, I hold it nearly always on the authority of other Jesuits. From this Society, I confess, I have learned what little I have in my books; for they have always been (as I never cease to declare) and are yet the masters in Moral Theology.[1] It is false to say that the Jesuits have followed one

[1] Of the writers of the Society of Jesus, whom our saint calls masters of Moral Theology, he gives, in the preface to the first edition of his work and in a letter of June 30, 1768, several names, as Lessius, Sanchez, Viva, Suarez, and, particularly, Cardinal De Lugo. The high eulogium which the saint (*Moral.* lib. iii. n. 552) bestows on the last-mentioned theologian deserves to be recorded here: *Doctissimus Lugo qui, post D. Thomam, non temere inter alios theologos facile princeps dici potest, cum in dubiis discutiendis sæpe, nullo præ-*

another like sheep, as some Rigorists affirm. On the contrary, in many points which they discuss, one writer is diametrically opposed to the other. In giving a decision, my rule has ever been to follow that which my conscience dictated to me as the more just. Many opinions there are which, although I have not admitted as probable, I have, nevertheless, not expressly rejected. You will, therefore, be convinced that I am neither too strict nor too lax.

Please let the reviser read this letter that he may know what system I hold. For I have ever maintained in the past and still maintain the system of Probabilism, and not that of Probabiliorism or Rigorism.

Moreover, let some Jesuit see the work. It will in no way displease him. I should be very happy to have Father Zaccaria take a look at it, for I consider him (as I have gathered from his works) a man of much learning and equity in his opinions, a man who keeps at an equal distance between Laxism and Rigorism.

Since you will provide that learned men be at hand for the printing, it will not be necessary to send me the proofs to Naples for revision, as I wrote you in my last. I entertained a fear that some mistake might be made in regard to the notes I have added, which are, indeed, many and of great usefulness. It is true, all of them bear their marks of citation and reference, nevertheless, it will be necessary to have a very diligent person compare them page for page; one page omitted, or not put in its proper place, will suffice to cause much confusion. For this reason the person employed for this work must be very watchful, especially so since the pages referred to in the body of the work must of necessity be changed, as the book is being published in an altogether different form and with the notes contained in the Neapolitan edition.

eunte, falcem ita ad radicem ponit, ut rationes, quas ipse in medium adducit, difficulter solvi valeant.

Once more I recommend you to have the quotations from authors compared by two persons with the originals, for without this precaution the corrector will not be able to detect any errors; and if the quotations are incorrectly given (a fault of which compositors are frequently guilty), the book will be of no utility, and will fall into discredit.

The two indexes, as you will have observed, should be arranged after this first volume is printed, and then let them be added to it, otherwise the pages referred to cannot be inserted either in the first or in the second index.

Again I beseech you to preserve this letter together with those I have hitherto written, that the compositor and reviser may read them. Pardon me if I am importunate in repeating the same things so many times. I have repeated them, because if these matters are disregarded in the printing, there will be no after-remedy.

Let the paper be better than that used for the work of La Croix. The type in that work is first-rate, but the paper is not, and, you know, the paper makes the type more prominent.

The form you adopted for the work of La Croix appears to me rather unhandy for the reader. I should think it would be better to have the *Theology* appear in small folio, or in quarto, but in large quarto. For the rest do as seems best to you.

Please inform me as soon as possible of the receipt of the book and of my letter.

With sincere compliments,—Live Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and Teresa!

I am

Your humble and obedient servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,
of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER II.

To the Same.

The saint again announces to him the sending of the work on theology.—Recommendations relative to the correction of the text.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, April 30, 1756.

Most Illustrious Sir: I reply to your letter of the 11th instant.

I had hoped that by that date you would have received the package containing the book,[1] and likewise the letter that accompanied it; but, as I learn, you have not received either. I beg you to inform me of the fact, when you receive the package, and thus relieve me of the great anxiety I am in lest it should go astray. And this the more so, on account of the labor it cost me to put the work in the state in which it will, I trust, reach you, that is, enriched by many new notes. Be assured, Sir, that if I had not already sold all my edition (of which, indeed, a small number of copies were printed), all would forsake mine and avail themselves of your edition, and mainly on account of these new and important additions. Moreover, you need not doubt that I shall do what I can to promote the sale of your works here.

Again I recommend to you the work of correction, and urge you to employ therein a person of experience in Moral Theology. It will suffice if he be a Jesuit, for these Fathers are masters in this science. Pardon me for bringing this ever before your mind; but if the person charged with this work be not learned and very watchful, mistakes will easily slip in, especially in the notes which are to be added. I am sure that the compositor will make many a blunder;

[1] The first volume of the *Moral Theology*.

and it will, therefore, be the business of the reviser to correct these, and to see that the notes are inserted in their entirety and in their proper places. Wherefore it would be well to tell the compositor not to remove the slips containing the notes I have written from the places in which I have arranged them; for if he changes them, it will be a job for the unfortunate reviser to find out where they belong.

I repeat my request that you have two persons verify the quotations and ascertain whether the references are numbered exactly; for, if the numbers are faulty, the reviser will be unable to detect the errors, and on account of this inexactness of the numbers, the whole work will be untrustworthy.

I assure you, I have already perused the learned notes of Father Zaccaria, and I have used them to advantage in the first volume which I sent you. I am doing the same in the second volume, the revision of which I am busily engaged upon. Few copies of my own edition now remain; these, too, will very soon be sold, as they are being continually sought for in all parts.

No more at present. Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

Assuring you of my regard, I remain

Your very devoted and humble servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] During Passion week I was afflicted with a sickness that threatened my life; but our Lord has left me still some few days on this earth.

If the Jesuit Fathers see any merit in my work, I beg you to tell them from me that whatever little I know of Moral Theology (and it has been my constant study for thirty years and more), I have learned from them. Live Jesus and Mary!

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 12.

To the Same.

He again asks for news concerning the volume sent to Venice, and begs the publisher to let him know what opinions in his *Moral Theology* have been pronounced too lax by a certain theologian.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, June 4, 1756.

Most Illustrious Sir: I am, indeed, very uneasy; for now some months have passed since I sent you my book, and I have not as yet any news from you concerning it. Had you not directed me to forward it by way of Manfredonia, through Signor Ernandez, I would have seen that it had reached you by this time, if not long before. I beseech you to let me know, at least, what Signor Ernandez has written to you, and for what reason the book has not yet arrived.

With regard to the letter of Father Zaccaria that you sent me, I ask you to ascertain from him which are the opinions he considered lax. If he cannot remember all, let him indicate to you, at least, those which occur to him.

As I wrote to you, these opinions will, in all likelihood, be found in the first edition of my work, the edition in one volume; for in the second edition I have retracted many former opinions. All these retracted opinions you will find in the printed catalogue [1] that I sent you with my letter. For the sake of my peace of mind, I pray you not to forget this, and I will add, do not fail to apprise me if you have

[1] The catalogue bears the title: "Elenchus 99 quæstionum post primam editionem anni 1748 reformatarum."

received an answer from Signor Ernandez. I remain,—Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

[*The signature of the saint is wanting.*]

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 13.

To the Same.

He asks anew to be informed of the judgment passed on some of his opinions, disapproves the form of index proposed, and speaks of a minor work which he would like him to print.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, June 12, 1756.

God be praised! The book has arrived, as I learn from your letter. I thank all those kind Jesuit Fathers who do me so much honor. But I expected that you would have ascertained from Father Zaccaria, as I requested you in my last, what were the lax opinions he found in my book. I speak of the edition in one volume, that is, the first, and not of the second edition which I sent you, for in this edition, as I informed you, I retracted many opinions admitted as probable in the first. Moreover, I sent you a list of these retracted opinions.

Let me know whether you received that letter, and I again beg you, for the sake of conscience, to inform me of the opinions considered lax by Father Zaccaria. With regard to the compiling of an index after the manner of Father Colendall's [1] there can be no question. To do this, I should have to begin a work of five or six months, whilst

[1] Father Leonard Colendall, S. J., had appended to the *Moral Theology* of Father La Croix an alphabetical index so complete, as to present nearly all the teaching of the work itself.

the arranging of the indexes as they stand in the book at present, will cost me two or three months of hard labor. Moreover, to make the new index and note all the pages, it would be necessary to have before me a copy of your new edition. Listen to me then: I think the index of Father Colendall is very fine; but it is useful for him only who possesses it separate from the work itself, as some have bought indexes. But he who already has the book, will, while consulting the index, always look to see what is in the body of the work; for very often in the body of the work, as Father Colendall himself has well remarked, there are notes to the teaching as well as limitations and restrictions, that are never found in the index. On that account, for him who possesses the work itself, an index which records the chief things, is sufficient. Besides, I have already made my index sufficiently minute, and it would appear to me superfluous to add the twenty or thirty pages more that would be required for this new one.

In the second volume, which I am still arranging, and which I shall send you, I have inserted, at the end of the second Neapolitan edition, a small practical treatise, entitled: *Practice of Confessors.*[1] I have written it in the vernacular for the convenience of the confessors in country places, who understand very little Latin. In it I have presented a summary of the teachings of my *Moral* relating to practical work, and many useful hints are given. I had it printed separately, and it has been well received. The Superior of the Mission Fathers of the Congregation of Naples has written to me a very flattering letter about it.

I shall take measures to have this little work reach you

[1] The work which we have elsewhere designated: "Practice of the Confessor for the Worthy Exercise of his Ministry." Later on, the holy Doctor translated it into Latin under the title: *Praxis Confessarii.*

as soon as possible, either by way of Foggia, or *via* Rome through Signor Agazzi, as you direct me, so that you may examine it and have it examined by others. It would be advisable to print it separately, and you may be assured that it would meet with a very good sale in Italy. I also add that, should you consent to publish it separately from the *Moral*, I shall enlarge it, for, at present, it is rather small. I repeat it, you could sell very many copies among those confessors in country places who cannot afford to spend much money, and who understand but little of Latin.

Perhaps you are already aware that the little work published at Naples, entitled: *The Village Confessor*, has had a great sale. It has gone through eight or nine editions, and has been printed even in Venice. But, be assured, my work is a much better one. It is clearer and contains a greater amount of useful teaching and instruction bearing on the exercise of the ministry. It would be a still better work, if I were to enlarge it according to my idea.

Enclosed you will find two sheets on which I have jotted down some emendations appertaining to the first volume, which I have already sent you. I send them on separate sheets, so that you may immediately insert them in their places, which I have marked very distinctly with the signs of reference. Do this at once, that they may not go astray.

Tendering you my humble respects, and assuring you of my regard,—Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

I am

Your humble and obedient servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] Live Jesus and Mary! I desired to let you know beforehand about the above-named work that you may think over it meanwhile, and that I myself may

have time to improve on it, as I told you before. I can work but little at a time, since my head troubles me. Should you, however, deem it more expedient to publish the work separately, it will be time enough to do so after the *Moral Theology* is finished. Live Jesus and Mary!

After the original in possession of Signor Hartwell, of the Swiss Guard, Chamberlain of Honor to His Holiness, Leo XIII.

LETTER 14.

To the Same.

He sends him the work mentioned in the preceding letter, and speaks of the necessity of translating it into Latin, if it is intended to be sold outside of Italy. He alludes, also, to the success he anticipates for the edition of the *Moral Theology*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, June 16, 1756.

I have received your esteemed letter together with the news that the book has arrived.

I sent you by post a long letter in which I spoke of the *Practice* to be inserted in large form in the second volume. But as I have had it published also in small form, I sent you a copy of it by way of Rome, and another by way of Foggia, for I wished to see by which route it would reach you sooner.

My purpose in sending you this copy in advance has been that you might look it over. If you wish to sell the book in Germany, Spain, etc., as you give me to understand, it will be necessary to have it translated into easy Latin; for strangers would not welcome the Italian. This work has everywhere met with a good reception.

In my letter I said, also, that if you wished to publish it separately in Italian, I would enlarge it by adding many useful things in accordance with a certain plan I had laid out. Be assured that here in Italy this work will have an immense sale, especially among confessors in country places, who do not know much Latin, and who are not inclined to spend money on large volumes. I know for a fact that similar works, such as *The New Confessor*, *The Confessor in Country and Village*, have gone through many editions, just because they are written in Italian and are sold for a low price.

I have been beforehand with you in the matter, for if you wish me to prepare this enlarged *Practice*, which is to contain many new points not found in either of the above-mentioned works, you must let me know soon, so that I may have more leisure to do it. I can do but little at a time, my head being a constant source of trouble to me since my last sickness. I say again, you may rest assured that thousands of copies of this work will be sold.

As to the *Prolegomena*,[1] which you mention in your letter, do as you think best.

In regard to the rigorous opinions, do not think that on their account the book will not be acceptable; indeed, for this very reason it has received universal praise even from the authors who have criticised these opinions in their printed

1 Father Zaccaria, the reviser of the third edition of the *Moral Theology*, which was being published by Remondini, offered himself to write the *Prolegomena*, or *Introduction*, of which mention is here made. Having been composed with the approval of the saint, it was published in this and in nearly all subsequent editions, even to our own day, under the title: "Francisci Antonii Zachariæ, e Societate Jesu theologi, Dissertatio ad Alphonsi de Ligorio Moralem Theologiam Prolegomena de causuisticæ theologiæ originibus, locis, atque præstantia."

works. You must know that nowadays, modern moralists, even though they be Probabilists, write with much more reserve than did the earlier ones. We must adhere to the golden mean. My work, it is needless to say, is entirely opposed to the school of Concina.

I would like to have, at least, a half-folio of your edition, to see how it is being printed. I sincerely hope it will succeed, first for the glory of God, and then for your advantage. It is certainly a remarkable collection of much matter in small space.

To a person who would now see the volume which I sent you, it would seem a curious jumble, on account of the many notes it contains; but when everything shall be set in order with that attention which such a work demands, and which I have constantly recommended, it will surely give universal satisfaction.

When you write to me, direct your letters: *Nocera via Naples*. That is the shortest route.

I have almost completed the second volume. I shall send it to you in a short while.

I close this letter, tendering you my sincere respects.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

[*The signature of the saint is wanting.*]

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 15.

To the Same.

He informs him of the sending of the second volume; speaks again of the other moral work to be added to it or printed separately, and describes the advantages of having it printed; he tells him of some minor works which Remondini may publish if he chooses.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, July 7, 1756.

Most Illustrious Sir: I reply to your last letter of the 25th of June.

There is no occasion to complain of Signor Michele Stasi, for he has been careful to have your letter reach me as quickly as possible. I did write him the letter you mention, and for the simple reason that for a long time I was unable to ascertain whether the first volume had reached you or not. But now I am in possession of three letters from you, in which you tell me that the book did arrive, and is at present well advanced in the printing. I sent you the second volume a week ago. On account of the persistency with which you urged me, I worked very hard to hasten its departure.

I did not send it by way of Rome, but by way of Foggia; for I found there a friend of ours who has an uncle, a merchant in Venice, to whom he is sending merchandise regularly during these months. The merchant's name is Filiasi. His Christian name has slipped my memory. You will receive another letter, which I sent you through Don Francesco Filiasi, a nephew of his, in which I asked you, in case you receive my letter without the book, to please send for it to the house of this merchant Filiasi, whose entire name you will find mentioned in the letter. I hope, how-

ever, that before you receive the letter in question, the book will be in your possession.

Please let me know whether you received that letter of mine, which contained certain notes to be added to pages 324 and 401. Tell me, also, if you received them in time, that is, before those respective pages where printed; for if not, you must place them as *addenda* at the end of the book, I mean at the end of the first volume, as they are very important.

I again send you the same notes, that they may reach you in time, as I see your edition is advancing.

By way of Rome, through Signor Giuseppe Agazzi, I sent you the book, entitled: *Practice*, together with a letter accompanying it. The same work I also sent to you by way of Foggia. You will, therefore, have time to consider what plan to adopt with regard to publishing this work, which belongs at the end of the second volume. You can determine also, whether you will have it translated into Latin, since it is your desire to sell it in transalpine countries. Lastly, you can decide whether you wish me to set to work at another larger *Practice* in the vernacular, for use in Italy only. It would not be well to join this latter to the *Moral Theology*, but print it separately, in about twenty-five or thirty folios. As I have stated in preceding letters, this would have a very large sale, especially among confessors in country places, who are unwilling to incur great expense, and who understand but little Latin. With this *Practice* in the vernacular, they could easily render themselves sufficiently competent for the discharge of this duty of their ministry. I speak only of confessors in rural districts.

For the rest, do not forget the above-mentioned small *Practice* at the end of the larger work on *Moral*. I say again, if you wish to send the work beyond the Alps, you must have it translated into Latin.

This work I could do myself, but as I already told you, since my last severe attack of sickness, my head troubles me very much. I should, therefore, be obliged to do the work little by little, and for that reason the book would not be ready in time for your edition.

You have also published, they tell me, a great number of smaller works. I have published several works of this kind, and they have met with general success.

I have composed the *Visits to the Blessed Sacrament*, together with meditations (*Considerations and Affections*) on the Passion of Jesus Christ, a book of about thirty folios. This has been printed nine times in Naples, and I know that it has been published also in Rome; but I have not learned that it has been issued at Venice.

I have also written a small book on the *Glories of Mary*, which has gone through many editions. This book is of nearly the same size as the preceding.

Finally, I have given to the press a work against modern infidels,[1] that is to say, the Materialists and Deists, in which I have collected in a few pages what many authors have

1 "A Short Treatise against the Errors of Modern Infidels, nowadays called Materialists and Deists." The saint, having sent a copy of this work to the Sovereign Pontiff, Benedict XIV., the latter thanked him for the same, in the following affectiona.e letter:

"*To Our Beloved Son, Alphonsus de Liguori, Priest of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.*

Beloved Son, Health and Apostolic Benediction.

We have just received, from the hands of Cardinal Orsini, your treatise, and We thank you most sincerely for this gift. The subject treated could not have been better adapted to the present needs, and since We are well acquainted with your ability, We doubt not that it has been handled as it ought. We shall read it at Our leisure, and even now We joyfully anticipate the pleasure We shall then experience. We have not lost sight of your business, or rather of the affair concerning your Congregation; but in reality, things are not in such a state as you imagine. We assure you that the affair is

said at length in a number of volumes. This book cost me much labor.

All these small works I shall send to you that you may examine them and have them printed or not, as you think best. If you think it would be useful to publish and circulate them throughout Italy, well and good. If not, you will, at least, appreciate my good intention for the glory of Jesus Christ and the Most Holy Virgin Mary, as well as my desire to further your interests; for frequently more profit is derived from such little works, just because they are so cheap, than from larger volumes.

Do not put yourself to any trouble on account of what I have here said, for I do not wish to importune or trouble you about these works, if you have no intention of publishing them at Venice. Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

Believe me, Dear Sir,

Your very humble and obedient servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] Live Jesus and Mary! I beseech you not to forget to ascertain from the esteemed Father Zaccaria which were the opinions in my first edition that he considered lax. I am desirous to know for the sake of my peace of mind. Live Jesus and Mary!

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

not being neglected; everything possible shall be done. In conclusion We impart to you Our Apostolic benediction.

Given at Rome, at S. Maria Maggiore, July 17, 1756, *in the sixteenth year of Our Pontificate.*"

LETTER 16.

To the Same.

He speaks of some additions to be made to the first volume of the *Theology*, and accepts the task of translating and enlarging the *Practice of Confessors*. He also speaks of the *Prolegomena* (Introduction) to the *Moral*, and asks for information concerning the *Compendium of Tournely's Dogmatic Theology*, which he counsels him to publish.

Live Jesus and Mary!

NAPLES, July 20, 1756.

Most Illustrious Sir: I now reply to your letter of the 8th instant.

I am, at present, in Naples on affairs of our Congregation, but you may continue to write to me to Nocera, for that is a sure way for me to receive all your letters.

I was sorry to hear that the notes did not arrive in time, and that the pages to which they belonged, had already been printed. If you do not care to print these pages over, you must, at least, place the notes at the end of the volume, under the title: *Advertenda*, and indicate the pages at which they should have been inserted. The reviser will know how to arrange this little appendix, which is altogether indispensable, as the notes contain matter of great importance. Moreover, I desire that your edition shall be so perfect as to be beyond criticism. On this account I have taken so much pains to review the questions from beginning to end.

As regards the *Practice* to be added to this work, I clearly see that it ought to be in Latin. I had hoped that you would find some person at Venice to do the translating; but since you ask me, I shall translate it with the assistance

of some of my brethren,[1] as I myself am too much occupied. Still you need not have any anxiety on the subject, for I shall review the translation myself.

I will send you, a little later, the *Practice* in the vernacular, but much enlarged. This work will certainly have a great sale in Italy, greater, indeed, than the larger one [*Moral Theology*]. I am engaged upon it at present, but I can do only a little at a time, on account of the numerous occupations that daily beset me.

I am highly pleased, and esteem it quite an honor, that the Reverend Father Zaccaria has written the *Prolegomena* that he desired. I thank him very much for it.

As regards the second volume, I wrote to you in several preceding letters that some weeks ago I sent it to you by the same route as that by which you received the *Practice*, I mean by way of Foggia; for I am of opinion that the route by Foggia is safer and quicker than by Rome. By the same route, I shall send you the Latin translation of the *Practice* when completed. This Latin *Practice*, however, is to be added to the second volume which is indeed more bulky than the first.

Continue to address all letters thus: *Nocera via Naples*.

The following I suggest in passing. There is a great demand at Naples for the *Compendium of the Dogmatic Theology of Tournely*, and I can scarcely find a single copy of it in the house of the Congregation of the Fathers of the Mission. Please inform me whether this work is still in print at Venice, for I myself, as well as some of my friends would like to have a number of copies. But if it is no longer in print there, you would really be doing a good thing to send for a copy to France and print an

[1] It was translated by Fathers Ferrarra and Caione in concert with the saint (as appears from the next letter), and was inserted in this edition under the title: "Praxis Confessarii ad bene excipiendas Confessiones."

edition of the Dogmatic part. The *Compendium of Moral Theology* which, in France, is published together with the *Dogmatic Theology*, is not much sought after. This is not the case, however, with the Dogmatic work, which is printed in two small volumes. All this only in passing.

Believe me, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and obedient servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original in possession of Don Carlo Abbasini, Rector of S. Bartolomeo, Verona.

LETTER 17.

To Father Don Gasparo Caione, Rector of the House at Caposele.

He asks his assistance for the above-mentioned translation, and tells him what kind of style is required.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NAPLES, July 24, 1756.

[*This letter was duplicated, and sent by different routes.*]

My Dear Don Gasparo: The publisher [1] at Venice writes to me that the printing of the work is going on; the first volume is nearly completed.

He tells me, also, that the *Practice of Confessors* ought to be translated into Latin, and desires to have this Latin translation by an early date. At present I have very much to do. Have the kindness, then, to assist me. Father Ferrara will do a part of the work, and your Reverence another part.

Commence to translate, not from the beginning, but from chap. viii., *On the Prudence of the Confessor*, which in the small *Practice* is at page 112. What precedes will be done partly by Father Ferrara, partly by myself.

[1] Giuseppe Remondini.

The principal thing is to adopt for the translation that simple style in which my *Moral Theology* is written, and this I beg your Reverence to do. Being a work altogether practical, it should, above all, be written with the greatest possible simplicity, and avoid all useless verbiage.

I beg you to leave everything else aside, and do me this favor; for the publisher is very instant in asking for it. Send it to me copied by a good hand. Use copying paper in quarto, and leave a respectable margin, so that I may add anything that may be needed.

I am busy at Naples, trying to obtain the approbation;[1] but I am meeting with many difficulties. May God come to our assistance! Have a novena made by the people, and one also by the Community, together with discipline every evening. Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

As soon as you come to the Appendix, page 161, of the *Practice*, just after the *Rule of Life of a Religious*, please send me what you have finished. Then omit all that follows and translate the *Method of Assisting the Dying*, in the body of the work. I beseech your Reverence to use the greatest possible diligence. Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

BROTHER ALFONSO,
of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the Neapolitan edition of 1848.

[1] The royal approbation of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

LETTER 18.

To Signor Giuseppe Remondini.

He awaits some news from the publisher, on the arrival of which, he says, he will send him the Latin translation.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, September 19, 1756.

My Dear Don Giuseppe: From week to week I am anxiously expecting some news from you. I send to the post-office regularly, but as yet I have received no answer to the many letters which I have written. I have even been unable to find out whether or not the second volume has reached you. In truth, I do not know what to think.

The *Practice* [1] is already finished, but I am hesitating to send it on account of the uncertainty caused by my not having had any letter from you for so long a time. I beg you to have the kindness to write yourself or through some one else, to rid me of this suspense. Direct your letters: *Nocera via Naples*, for by that way I shall surely receive them as in the past.

When I receive some news from you, I shall send you the *Practice* through Signor Giuseppe Agazzi; I have made this arrangement with him.

I remain,—Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

Most Illustrious Sir,

Your humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO MARIA DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

[1] The Latin translation, of which mention has been made.

LETTER 19.

To the Same.

He sends him the promised work together with another useful little treatise; and being anxious on account of not having an answer to former letters, he asks the reason.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, October 1, 1756.

Most Illustrious Sir: I send you the translation of the *Practice*, which has cost me nearly three months of labor; but I send it with anxiety, for now two months have elapsed since you have written to me in answer to the many letters I have sent you, and I know not what to think.

I wrote to Signor Giuseppe Agazzi that in case this translation will not be printed, he should see that it be returned to me to Naples, for I would not like to lose it. I cannot imagine, however, that after printing the first volume, you would be willing to give the public a faulty and imperfect work.

I hope that by this time you have received the second volume. I have not been able to obtain the least tidings of it.

You will notice that accompanying the manuscript of the *Practice*, there is another little work, entitled: *Examination of Candidates for Ordination*,[1] which will fill two or three folios.

This little work has been very urgently requested of me, even from distant places, for example, from Brescia, if I mistake not, and it is much desired by the young men. For that reason I composed it. It is short, but complete. It does not exactly belong to the larger work; still, I think many will probably purchase the complete *Theology*, just for this little addition. Should you, however, choose not

[1] It was printed under the title: *Examen Ordinandorum.*

to print it, I beg you to return it to me by the same route through Signor Agazzi. I shall then have it printed elsewhere.

Lastly, I pray you, tell me why I have had no news from you for so long a time, not one word in answer to the many letters I sent you; and especially to one letter that contained a recent *decision* of the reigning Pontiff on the subject of fasting. Let me know whether you received the second volume by way of Foggia through Signor Filiasi. If this unfortunate second volume should have gone astray, inform me; and I shall send you another copy together with the same additions.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

Believe me, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] Together with this letter I send you two copies of a short *Reply* [1] which I was obliged to make to an anonymous author who has written against Father Plazza, and who has, at the end of his work, devoted one chapter to an attack on myself, and another against Father Zaccaria.

You will please give one of these pamphlets to Father

[1] "Reply to an Author who has Censured a work of P. D. Alfonso de Liguori on the Blessed Virgin, entitled: The Glories of Mary, and also the Moral Theology of the same," The anonymous work, published in Venice in 1755 from the press of Giovanni Battista Pasquali, bore the title: "Lamindi Pritanii redivivi epistola paranetica ad P. Bened. Plazza." Father Benedetto Plazza was a Jesuit of Sicily, much distinguished for his learning and virtue. He had a number of disputes with the celebrated Muratori and with Father Concina on some important theological questions. *Lamindo Pritanio* was the pseudonym of Muratori. This learned man having died in the year 1750, the anonymous author, just spoken of, shielded himself under the name of *Lamindo Pritanio returned to life.*

Zaccaria, to whom I have announced that he would receive it from you. Live Jesus and Mary!

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 20.

To Signor Giacomo Storti, at Foggia.

He asks him for some news of Remondini, from whom he has so long been vainly expecting an answer.

Live Jesus and Mary!

NOCERA DE' PAGANI, October 4, 1756.

Illustrious Sir: This morning your note from Foggia, came to hand, in which you state that you have received from Francesco Tiorro, master of the Neapolitan bark, a package containing my *Moral Theology*.

I hope you sent the package without delay to Signor Giuseppe Remondini. I really do not know what is the matter; for although I have written many letters to him, it is now about two months since he has sent me a word. He had urgently requested me to send him the *Practice of Confessors*, translated into Latin, which was to appear at the end of the work, of which he had already printed the first volume. After three months of hard labor, I had it completed, but hesitated to send it, not having had any communication from Venice for so long a time. At last, as I had to leave home to go on a mission, I sent it in a package to Signor Giuseppe Agazzi in Rome that he might forward it to Remondini, as the latter had himself directed.

I pray you, therefore, let Remondini know that the work has been sent on to Rome to the said Signor Giuseppe Agazzi, so that the publisher may write to him to forward it at once. In the meantime, to relieve me of this worry, I ask you to let me know what is the matter with Signor Remondini, and why he no longer answers the many letters

I have written him, letters which contain very important points for the work he is printing.

Write to me as soon as possible, so that I may know how to act.

Direct your letter to me personally, and address it: *Nocerà de' Pagani via Naples.*

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and obedient servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

Rector Major,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 21.

To Signor Giuseppe Remondini.

He complains of his long silence, and again acquaints the publisher of the shipments made according to his directions.

NOCERA, October 11, 1756.

Most Illustrious Sir: To tell you the truth, I have become weary of writing to you; for to the many letters which I sent you, asking you whether you had received the second volume of the *Theology*, and also to others which contained important matter, I see not even the shadow of an answer. One would think the plague had broken out between Naples and Venice.

I wish to inform you that I have already sent to Signor Giuseppe Agazzi in Rome, the translation of the *Practice*, which you so urgently requested of me. I laid everything else aside and worked at it nearly three months, in order to have it finished in time; and then, full of uncertainty, I had to send it off at the risk of losing it, as I had received from you no answer to my many letters. I did send it off, at

length, because you had directed me to forward the manuscript through the aforesaid Signor Agazzi; and I wrote to him inquiring about you, as I am unable to receive such information in any other way.

With the translation, I enclosed in the package another work, entitled: *Examination of Candidates for Ordination*, which will cover two or three folios. It is a very useful little work, and has been asked for by many, especially by the young men.

After writing the above, I received a note this very morning from Signor Giacomo Storti (who claims to be your agent at Foggia), in which he tells me that he has received the second volume from the master of the bark.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] I again remind you to direct your letters thus: *Nocera de' Pagani via Naples.*

After a copy.

LETTER 22.

To the Same.

He rejoices at having, at length, received the desired letters, tells him how to send them for the future, and speaks of other matters pertaining to the printing of his different works.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, October 22, 1756.

Most Illustrious Sir: *Gloria Patri!* After more than two months of suspense on account of your inexplicable silence, I have, at length, received your latest letters.

I have not failed to make inquiries in different places, even in Naples, and I do not know how this mistake could have occurred: that you should have received my letters, while I was unable to receive yours. In future, therefore, for security's sake, send me your answers enclosed in your letters to Signor Stasi, and in the same way I shall send you my letters.

The translation of the *Practice* was completed some weeks ago, and has been sent to Signor Agazzi in Rome. I beg you to write to him immediately to forward it to you. I assure you, it is translated with all due attention.

I understand from what you write in what form the work will appear. It is all right.

I thank Father Zaccaria for having deigned to honor my work with his *Prolegomena*. I am just finishing the reading of his printed Letters, which evidence great genius and learning.

As soon as you receive the *Practice* from Signor Agazzi, please, for my peace of mind, inform me of it without delay. If you should so desire, I will send you some time later through the same Signor Agazzi, my spiritual works, which have had a great sale here. I trust that they will meet with the same reception in the whole of Italy.

I am engaged upon the Italian *Compendium of the Moral Theology;*[1] but considerable time will be required, as I have to steal the moments here and there to work at it.

1 The Compendium was published in three small volumes with the title: "Introduction and Practice for Confessors." Later on it was translated into Latin under the title: *Homo Apostolicus*. The saint usually calls it the large *Practice*, to distinguish it from the "Practice of the Confessor for the worthy Exercise of his Ministry" (Praxis Confessarii ad bene excipiendas Confessiones).

Accept, Illustrious Sir, my sincere compliments, and believe me,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 23.

To the Same.

He recommends him to take steps to trace up a work already sent him, asks him whether or not he desires to print some of his spiritual works, and endeavors to incite him thereto. He asks, also, for information on other matters.

PAGANI, October 29, 1756.

Most Illustrious Sir: In a preceding letter I told you that I had received two letters from you, together with the note informing me that the second volume had reached you. At present I have but two items to write to you.

In the first place, it is now many weeks since I sent the Latin translation of the *Practice* by the ordinary courier to Signor Giuseppe Agazzi at Rome. The manuscript was enclosed in a small box and, for greater security, I paid beforehand at Naples the entire cost of sending it to Rome. But with all this, I have not yet received a single line from Signor Agazzi, although I had already arranged with him to forward the *Practice* in this way. I do not know the reason of his silence. Please let me know whether he has, perhaps, already sent the manuscript to you. If he has not, write to him and see what is the matter. After working three months at this translation, I should not like to begin it anew.

My second request is this: some time ago I wrote to you that for the glory of God and for your own interest, I wished to have you print my spiritual works, namely: the little book on the Blessed Sacrament, the work on our Lady, and some other small works, such as the one I have recently composed against Materialists and Deists. I said also that I desired you to print the large *Practice* in the vernacular, a compendium of Moral Theology, having reference to practical matter. This work I am at present engaged upon, but much time will be required to complete it, as it is a very tedious task. I wish to have from you a clear and precise statement whether you intend to print and republish these works; for as far as the spiritual works are concerned, I could send them to you at once.

For your guidance in the matter, I shall inform you that these smaller works have received much commendation, and had a great sale. They have been published many times, even here in Naples, where there is not such traffic with all parts of Italy, as in Venice.

The *Compendium of Moral* I shall send you as soon as I have finished it. I mention these things because this very week I have had a letter from Venice recommending to me a certain publisher who would like to print some of my works. I replied that I had already spoken to you about the printing of these works, and that, consequently, it was not proper for me to give them to another. I said, however, that in case you should write to me that you did not wish to publish them, I would send them to him.

Let me know then, I pray you, whether you desire me to send first the above-mentioned spiritual works, and afterwards the *Compendium of Moral* when it shall be completed.

Remember that the book on our Lady will be of about thirty folios; that on the Blessed Sacrament, to which are joined several other little spiritual treatises together with

my hymns, is of nearly twenty folios. The remaining works are much smaller. The *Compendium* will require about thirty folios.

If you wish to have these books, let me know by what route I should send them, and I shall forward them at once. I would send them through Signor Agazzi, if that way were not, for the present, insecure. To be brief, let me have your directions, and I will do as you desire.

In another letter I told you that, accompanying the *Practice*, I sent you an extra little treatise, entitled: *Examination of Candidates for Ordination.* It is a work much desired by the young men. If you should choose to print a number of copies of it separately from the *Moral*, I think you would sell very many. This, however, is a matter of no great moment. Act as seems best to you.

I have the honor to be, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and obedient servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] I had intended to send you the *Compendium of Tournely* to print, but I learned that it has already been printed in Venice, and I expect it in a few days. Let me know whether you have printed the letters of Father Barra. If not, who has printed them?

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 24.

To the Same.

He again speaks of the manuscript of the *Praxis Confessarii.*

NOCERA DE' PAGANI, November 4, 1756.

Most Illustrious Sir: Last week I wrote to you that I had already sent by the ordinary courier a package addressed

to Signor Agazzi in Rome, containing the manuscript of the Latin translation of the *Practice*. But now the Brother informs me that the courier refused to take it, as manuscripts belong to the letter-post. This being the case, I have sent the package to Rome by water, directing it to the Pious Workers of S. Maria de' Monti. You can, therefore, either write to Signor Agazzi to go for it, or else send him this letter.

I have written a number of letters to the said Signor Agazzi; but I have received no answer. Do you, therefore, write to him; perhaps he never goes to the post-office to get my letters.

This very morning I have received another letter from you. I see that everything has now reached you, except that unfortunate *Practice*, which causes me so great anxiety. I should very much regret to have it go astray, for it has cost me three months of hard labor, and I should be very sorry to be obliged to do the same work over again.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

I am, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and obedient servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] One word, and I have finished. I beg you to continue to write through Signor Stasi, for thus your letters will always come safe to hand.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 25.

To the Same.

He promises to send him some spiritual works for printing, and speaks of the *Instruction and Practice*, which he is engaged upon and for which he requests some folios of the printed work.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, December 18, 1756.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received your letter of November 20.

We shall arrange matters thus: as soon as the large work [*Moral Theology*] is finished, I shall send you my spiritual works. Rest assured, I will not send them to others. I shall see, also, that they are sent *via* Manfredonia, as you advise.

At present, I am working at the large *Practice*, or *Compendium of Moral Theology;* but it is a very tedious task, and much time will be required to complete it. But I am not wasting a moment.

In my last letter I told you that to abbreviate certain points more exactly, it would be an immense help to me to have a copy of all the folios of your new edition of the *Moral Theology*, for this latter contains many things not to be found in the first edition. I asked you, therefore, to send me a copy through Signor Stasi, remarking, at the same time, that it did not matter if the indexes, *Prolegomena*, etc., were wanting.

I remain,—Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

Your humble and obedient servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 26.

To the Same.

Recommendations relative to a Pontifical *decision*.—Some advice concerning the printing of the *Compendium of Tournely*.—A word about the large *Practice*.

NOCERA, January 20, 1757.

Most Illustrious Sir: To-day, the 20th of January, I received a letter of yours, dated the 9th of September of the past year. Indeed, one cannot help losing patience with this miserable post-office business.

In this letter you tell me two things: first, that you will put the *decision* of the Pope relative to fasting in its proper place. It seems to me, you will not be able to do this without reprinting the sheet, for the first volume, to which the treatise on fasting belongs, is already printed; and as to the second volume, since the subject of fasting is not treated therein, this addition would be out of place in it, and you would have to insert it at the end of the volume in the form of a special appendix. However, I presume the matter is already arranged.

As regards the *Compendium of Tournely*, you ask me whether it would be better to print the entire work, or only the Dogmatic part. I answer, as I have told you before, that my advice is to print the Dogmatic part only; for I do not know what sort of sale the *Moral* would have, but I do know that the *Dogma* is everywhere in demand.

There is no doubt that this work of Tournely and of his continuator, who composed the *Moral*, has met with success. Why not, then, reprint the whole work, and afterward print the *Dogma* separately? But I have learned that the Dogmatic part is already printed separately, and for the present I have ordered twelve copies of it for our Congrega-

tion from Signor Stasi. If, as I am of the opinion, you have printed it, please send them to me without delay.

I hope that the second volume [of the *Theology*] is now finished. I thank Father Zaccaria for the services you mentioned to me.

As soon as the work is finished, inform me of it, for many in this locality have asked me for it.

I again make known to you, as I have done once before, that I am now putting the finishing strokes to the large Italian *Practice;* but I am unable to make it altogether uniform and perfect, unless I have before my eyes your new edition of the *Moral;* for thus only could I make use of the emendations that I have introduced into the latter. For this reason I asked you to send me a copy of all the printed sheets, even if you had not yet finished printing the entire work. However, if the work is very near completion, I can wait.

Assuring you of my sincere regard, I remain,—Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 27.

To the Same.

He speaks of a modification to be introduced into the preface of the *Moral Theology*, and asks by what route he should send his works.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, January 23, 1757.

Most Illustrious Sir: I received to-day your letter of the 8th of January, in which you declare to me that you

have been unable to find the *Elenchus* mentioned in the preface.

I must needs explain myself. In the second Neapolitan edition, I inserted this *Elenchus* (or rather I inserted two: one in the first volume, the other in the second), of all the questions in which I retracted opinions held in the first edition.

In preparing this third edition, namely yours, I did not deem it necessary to insert this *Elenchus;* therefore, I eliminated it from the two volumes that I sent you; but it never entered my mind to rectify the passage in which I had referred to it. A still greater reason induced me to withhold these *Elenchi*, namely, that if they were inserted, several things would have to be changed.

I now see that you must do one of two things: either change the following passage in the preface: *Tibi suadere poterit Elenchus*, with the three lines that follow, to the words: *utriusque tomi*, and replace them with these words, beginning a little higher up: *Quod satis, benevole lector, tibi suadere poterit quod non erubuerim me retractare in pluribus opinionibus, quas in prima hujus libri editione approbavi;*[1] or else (and this, I believe, will be preferable) let the preface stand as it is, and insert the two *Elenchi*, one in the first volume, the other in the second. I have given them their proper form, and am sending them to you.

This will be preferable, I say, because in the edition you are publishing, the third, I have amended and corrected many points contained in the second edition, that is to say, in the two volumes printed at Naples that I sent to you.

[1] It was thus arranged. In the preface to the second edition, we read: *Quod satis, benevole lector, tibi suadere poterit Elenchus quæstionum in quibus sententias, quas in priore editione tenueram mutavi.* In the preface to the third edition, the foregoing lines were replaced by the following: *Quod satis, benevole lector, ex eo cognoscere poteris, quod ego non paucas sententias, quas in prima et secunda hujus operis editione tenueram, in hac tertia mutare non dubitavi.*

These corrections I marked down in the two *Elenchi*, as you will perceive, and they are, indeed, very important.

For the rest, do as you think best; however, if you could arrange the matter as I have told you, I would be more satisfied.

I see from your letter that you will send me the printed sheets. I am waiting for them and hope they will soon arrive; for I have been obliged to suspend my labors on the large *Practice* in many points. In fact, I cannot settle things definitively, until I see how matters are arranged in your edition.

This large *Practice*, which occupies my attention at present, will be, I assure you, an excellent work. Nor am I alone in saying this. All who have read one or the other treatise, say the same thing. You will, I trust, sell thousands of copies, and what is more, the person that reads this *Practice*, will certainly conceive a desire to procure the larger work on *Moral*, also. I never dreamed that the labor entailed would be so considerable. I am plodding away at the work, however, with much diligence, and am now well advanced in it.

As to my spiritual works, I am ready to send them to you: but I think that just now the Manfredonia route will offer some difficulties as the present is no time for travelling. Should a favorable opportunity for sending them to Rome to Signor Agazzi present itself, would you like me to send them that way? If you say no, I shall await some chance to send them *via* Manfredonia. Please write me an answer on this point.

Be persuaded that these spiritual works of mine will meet with a great sale wherever you send them, as has been the case in this kingdom. I need only tell you that they have gone through several editions. And I again repeat that my sole design in all this is to promote first of all the glory of God, and then your personal interests.

I sent to you a short time ago a reply concerning the *Compendium of Tournely*. I trust that, by this time, you have received it. I am waiting for these compendiums of the *Dogma*, for they are already printed, I am told, and I am of the opinion that you, also, have published them.

Tendering you my most humble salutations, I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 28.

To the Same.

About a correction to be made in the second volume of the *Moral*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA [January] 27, 1757.

Most Illustrious Sir: Pardon me for so quickly sending you another letter, but for two days past my mind has been troubled on account of a change that must be made in the second volume. At first I was in doubt, but now I am fully persuaded the change must be made. I am sorry that the sheet has already been printed. But it is a good thing that I remarked the error before the work was published, for otherwise it stood in danger of being prohibited, on account of a bad explanation of a certain teaching with reference to a Bull of the present Pope, who is very touchy on the subject of his Bulls. And it could easily happen that some evil-minded person would denounce this passage to the Pope and thus have the work prohibited. It is on this account that I write to you in such haste, and

I beg you, if you receive the enclosed slip, to inform me of it without delay.

Pardon me for giving you the trouble of changing this sheet. We are men, and cannot think of everything at the right time. I hesitated about inflicting on you the trouble of making this change; but in the end I judged it necessary for fear the book might be prohibited, and all the money it cost you to issue the work would be lost.

I have nothing further to add. I beg you to accept my humble salutations.—Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph! I subscribe myself, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] One word more. Please let me know whether you have the book entitled: "Sanctity and Duties of Monastic Life, by Father Rancé, Trappist." This work has met with great success in France, but I do not know whether it has been translated into Italian. One thing is certain, if it were translated, it would have a great sale.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 29.

To the Same.

He speaks of some letters sent to the publisher, and requests him to hasten the publication of the *Compendium of Tournely*. He makes, also, a remark concerning the Italian *Compendium of Moral.*

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, March 14, 1757.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have sent my ascetical works to you *via* Foggia and Manfredonia. You may make whatever use of them you please. Together with these works

you will receive a letter from me in which you will read my sentiments on the matter.

I have written to you several letters, also, concerning the *Elenchus*, and likewise an important letter relative to the *Moral*, but as yet I have received no answer to them.

I am of the opinion that your letters have been intercepted, as happened to them on a previous occasion, for I am fully aware it is not a want of attention on your part. I beg you, therefore, to let me have another reply, as the one you sent me is, without doubt, detained on some pontoon.

Please advise me whether you have commenced to print separately the *Compendium of Tournely*, as I requested. I have need of a number of copies of this work. Therefore, as soon as you have finished printing it, be so kind as to send me at least fifteen copies through Signor Stasi. I shall give every one of them to our students who have to begin their course of theology in May. However, should the printing be delayed too long, I am afraid the professors will be constrained to take some other text-book. Tell me, then, distinctly whether the printing of this *Dogma* has been begun, and by what time it will be completed.

As regards the Italian *Compendium of Moral*, I have already written to you that certain persons have troubled and disconcerted my mind, by telling me that, if I should publish this book in the vernacular, it might be prohibited.

Another cause for apprehension has been added to this, namely, that, being printed at such a distance as to render it impossible for me to revise the work, it will surely contain a great number of errors and defects, on account of the multiplicity of references and correction signs found therein.

Moreover, in the work of revision, I should be obliged to make many additions and arrangements, all of which I cannot at present indicate. Pray to God that he may give me light and deliver me from my embarrassment.

For my consolation, tell me when the *Moral* will be completed.

Another word about the *Compendium of Tournely.* I was of the opinion that this compendium of *Dogma* had already been printed, information having been given me to that effect. But when the work arrived at Naples, I found it to be not the compendium of theology I was looking for, namely, the compendium of the continuator, but a work composed by Honoré Tournely himself, treating of the sacraments. This latter is of no use to me. I beg you, then, to finish as soon as possible the printing of the separate compendium of Dogma.

Lastly, do not fail to send a good number of copies of my *Moral* to Stasi or to other booksellers, as I myself have received very many requests to purchase copies from you.

I remain, subscribing myself,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 30.

To the Same.

He expresses his joy at hearing of the completion of the printing of the *Moral.* He particularly recommends two of his ascetical works for printing, and after giving his reasons for writing the *Instruction and Practice* in the vernacular, he tells the publisher he will take time to consider his proposal to translate this work into Latin.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, April 15, 1757.

Most Illustrious Sir: After long waiting I have at last received the information from your much esteemed letter

that the work is completed and that you are sending me a dozen copies. I thank you most sincerely for this gift, and await the copies with impatience.

On my part, I have despatched to you *via* Manfredonia (as I wrote you in a previous letter) the box containing my ascetical works. You may do with them what you please; but, I can assure you, that if you print the *Visits* and the work on our Lady, you will sell an immense number. I conclude this from the sale I have witnessed of these two books in the kingdom of Naples and Sicily, where not a day passes without their being in constant demand.

As regards the compendium [*Instruction and Practice*] of which you write to me, I have already informed you that my purpose in composing this work was to help those unlearned confessors who do not understand the Latin tongue well. It is written in Italian. I should, therefore, be obliged to translate the entire work.

You now declare to me that this compendium must *of necessity* be written *in Latin*. The translation into Latin of the *Practice* [1] cost me six months of labor, whilst for this compendium a year and a half would hardly be sufficient. You must not imagine that it is a short work. Your letter has quite embarrassed me. But I shall consult with my companions and then resolve on what to do in the matter.

Meanwhile, I beg you, in order to relieve my anxiety, to write to me as soon as you receive the ascetical works. I care to reap no other advantage from them than the glory of God.

I repeat once more, if you print the *Visits* and the work on our Lady, as also the other works, you will never repent of it, especially now that the publication of my *Moral* has made my miserable name more known. On

[1] The smaller *Practice* of which mention is made in Letters 7, 13, 17.

this account, these other works of mine will sell more easily.

I shall not fail to do all in my power to further the sale of your copies of my *Moral*. A great number has already been asked for. Those which you are sending to Naples will arrive soon, I trust, and immediately I shall take care to have them circulated. I am pleased that you have informed me to whom you are forwarding them, to Signor Stasi, namely, and to Aiello. Other booksellers, also, in Naples will, I understand, send you orders.

As regards the *Tournelys*, I am informed that Pezzana is printing them.

I place myself at your disposal for any service I can render you, and remain, Illustrious Sir,—Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 31.

To the Same.

He asks for a certain number of copies of the *Moral*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, April 25, 1757.

Most Illustrious Sir: Last week I wrote a letter to you thanking you for the twelve copies you were so kind as to present to me.

But as you are aware, we possess many houses in this kingdom, and my companions, desiring to study *Moral* from this new Venetian edition on account of the numerous additions and emendations it contains, wish to have more copies of

the same. Please, then, have the goodness to send me fifteen, or, at least, ten more copies, not as a gift, but at cost price. Let me know whether you will accord me this favor.

Tendering you my most humble salutations, I remain, Illustrious Sir,—Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 32.

To the Same.

He recommends to his charity a bookseller who has met with a sudden loss, and renews his request for the copies of the *Moral*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, May 23, 1757.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have learned that the vessel which carried the books you sent to Signor Michele Stasi has fallen into the hands of the Turks. I come, then, at the solicitation of Signor Michele, to ask you to grant to this bookseller a delay of payment, on account of the loss he has sustained by this misfortune, which loss, he tells me, amounts altogether to seven hundred ducats, as the books sent to him by Pezzana were on the same vessel. I ask you to be as lenient with him as possible.

I expect very soon to receive the twelve copies you presented to me. My companions are impatient to receive them for purposes of study, enriched as they are by so many additions and emendations. They are continually importuning me with their requests for the books.

In my last letter I asked you to please favor me, if pos-

sible, with ten more copies, not as a present, but at cost price, so that I may distribute them among my other houses. They are all anxiously waiting to receive them. But if the thing is not possible, I do not wish to be importunate. I shall content myself with the above-mentioned twelve copies.

I say once more, please send them to me as soon as possible. Inform me whether you have, as yet, received my spiritual works which I sent through Filiasi.

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,
of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 33.

To the Same.

He promises to translate the large *Practice* into Latin and speaks of the success which a new edition of his ascetical works would obtain.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, June 2, 1757.

Most Illustrious Sir: I received your most esteemed letter of the 20th of May, and I thank you very much for the additional donation of twenty copies. I await the same with great eagerness.

Such generosity on your part has forced me, so to speak, to concede to your request to send you the *Compendium* translated into Latin.[1] But you must have a little

[1] The *Homo Apostolicus*, of which mention has already been made.

patience, for the work was composed entirely in Italian and some time will be required for the translation, as also for the recopying of it in a legible hand.

You need not have any misgivings. I shall send to you for publication all my works as well as those of my companions. With God's help, I hope to compose several additional works which I shall transmit to you.

You have not yet informed me whether you received the small box containing my ascetical works which I despatched to Foggia. The fact of your not telling me anything of them, is proof to me, that you have not yet received them. I intend to write to Signor Filiasi of Foggia and tell him to forward them to you with as much speed as possible.

Should you give them to print, I believe you will reap a great profit from them, for I am told that the works composed by my miserable self are in demand, not only in the kingdom of Naples and Sicily, but throughout all Italy. This will be more the case now that the large *Moral* has appeared.

These works are, in truth, short, but they are at the same time very elaborate and richly stored with matter, as I am no friend of verbosity. To compose these little works, I read hundreds of books from which I culled the best flowers. Of the same stamp, will be the other works I purpose to write.

Once more, I thank you for your offer of a reduction of twenty-five per cent on your books. I shall secretly notify my companions in every one of our houses of the same, and forbid them to speak of it to outsiders. But I should like very much to have you send me a list of the books published by you. We could then regulate our purchases accordingly.

I beg you to accept the expression of my most profound

respect, and remain, Illustrious Sir,—Live Jesus, Joseph, and Mary!

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 34.

To the Same.

He acknowledges the receipt of the copies of the *Moral*, gives some details concerning the large *Practice*, and praises the *Prolegomena* of Father Zaccaria.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, July 22, 1757.

Most Illustrious Sir: To my great consolation, I have received your very generous gift of the thirty-two copies of the *Moral* and the twenty-two *Practices*.

I have the pleasure of informing you that the Latin translation of the *Compendium*, or large *Practice*, is being hastened. An estimate has been made, and it will constitute a work of two volumes of thirty folios each.

As I already informed you, I first composed this book in Italian, because I was requested to do so, and many have asked me for copies of the same. But as you wish, by all means, to have this *Practice* in Latin, it is being translated. Your generosity to me has constrained me to comply. I could not bring myself to say no.

I am now having printed, at my own expense, a certain number of copies in Italian for those who asked me for

them. As soon as they are printed, I shall send you a copy, so that you may publish this *Practice* in the vernacular, also, should you think fit, and then have it circulated throughout Italy. My copies will be disposed of immediately on their appearance, but they will not go beyond the limits of the kingdom. Your edition, on the other hand, may be scattered broadcast from Venice through the length and breadth of the country. In the meantime, active work is being done on the Latin translation of the same.

I beg you not to forget to notify me as soon as you receive the little box containing my ascetical works. I have received word that it has by this time left Manfredonia. Please inform me, also, whether you are resolved to print some of these works. Your reply will serve to regulate my conduct; for those which you print, I shall not have reprinted. Indeed, my edition of several of them is almost completely sold.

I must tell you, your edition of the *Moral* is excellent; the paper is good, and the printing exquisite. I understand many have procured a copy, and many more are asking for one. The *Prolegomena* of Father Zaccaria in particular is very beautiful, as learned as it is useful. This good Father has honored me very much by the dedicatory letter prefacing his work. I must needs thank him for this, but as I know not to what address I should send my letter, I ask you to see that it reaches him. This will be an easy matter for you.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] Please inform me by what route you desire me to send you the Latin translation of the *Practice*. This work is an important one, and I should hardly have the

courage to commence it anew, should it go astray. Tell me, then, which route you believe to be the safest.

Live Jesus and Mary!

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 35.

To the Same.

He speaks of the Latin translation of the large *Practice* and tells why he had printed a number of copies of the Italian edition. He also informs him of the precautions taken to avoid the placing of this latter on the Index.

NAPLES, August 28, 1757.

Most Illustrious Sir; This letter is a response to your most esteemed favor of the 13th of August.

I am rejoiced to hear that you have received the small box. If you print these little works, especially the one on our Lady and that on the Blessed Sacrament and the Passion, you will realize great profit therefrom, I trust; in fact, I am sure of it. A guarantee of this is the success these latter and other works of mine obtained in the kingdom of Naples.

Now a few words concerning the *Practice*. You certainly remember having written to me that it was your desire to have this *Practice by all means* in Latin, and I answered you immediately that I did not think I was able to undertake the new labor of translating it. Since that time, your generosity in my regard has constrained me, as it were, to recall my decision, and send you the work translated into Latin. However, for this translation I need the assistance of others; I cannot do it alone on account of the fatigue caused by dictating. The translation is already commenced, and as soon as it is completed, I shall send it to you.

As regards the Italian *Practice*, I am not having it published by any printer of Naples. I am simply printing a small number of copies at my own expense. This printing has already been begun. I repeat again what I believe I told you on another occasion, namely, taking everything into consideration, it would be impossible for me to allow the first copies of this *Practice* to be printed at Venice without my being able to correct the proof-sheets; for this volume is a most intricately arranged work, and to dispose all the different matter in clear and succinct order, is a very difficult task. Now that I have begun to review the proof-sheets, I find that I must change many things—nay, that I shall have to make even a third correction.

You need have no doubt but that the Latin edition of the Italian *Practice* now being printed, will be an excellent one. As for the Italian edition, remember, I am having only a small number of copies printed. Now, if you exclude those copies, which I must of necessity present to my friends and to my ministers, very few will remain, and those few will be quickly disposed of. I have received innumerable requests for them, so that, even if I were to print two or three thousand copies, they would all disappear in an instant. But, as I said before, I shall have very few copies to sell. I shall, therefore, send you both works, that is, the Italian edition in print, and the Latin edition in manuscript.

As regards the danger of the work being prohibited by Rome, I can assure you that this is altogether imaginary. However, I have taken precautions. I wrote to Rome on the subject, and the Congregation of the Index answered me that I need have no anxiety, and that I can safely publish the work in the manner indicated by me, namely, using the Latin language when treating of the Sixth Commandment, the *debitum*, etc.

As soon as the two works are completed, I shall, in compliance with your instructions, forward them to you through Signor Agazzi. However, I have not yet finished the work. At this moment I am engaged on the treatise on the sacraments. But I repeat, in a short time I shall send you both editions.

Tendering you my most humble salutations,—Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph! I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 36.

To the Same.

He asks him when he will be able to print the *Instruction and Practice*, and alludes to the great success it will meet with. He also recommends to the publisher not to send any copies of the *Moral* to France, and gives his reasons for this.

Live Jesus, Joseph, and Mary!

NOCERA, March 10, 1758.

Most Illustrious Sir: The Italian *Compendium*, entitled: *Instruction and Practice for a Confessor*, has appeared. There has been here in Naples quite a contest to get the copies I have had printed, and in a short time not a single one will remain. Please let me know when you will be able to reprint this book, and I shall send you a copy.

If I mistake not, you wrote to me to forward it to you by way of Rome through Signor Giuseppe Agazzi. You must, however, first inform me whether you have sent word to Signor Giuseppe. Should you, on the other hand, desire me to transmit it to you *via* Manfredonia, let me know.

The Latin translation of the *Compendium* is well under way, but is not yet completed. Quite an amount of labor is required for the translating and copying.

Tell me, also, whether you wish me to defer sending the Italian edition until the Latin one is completed, and then have both sent at the same time.

You may feel certain that this edition in the vernacular will have an immense sale. Here in the kingdom it has met with great success, and, as I mentioned to you, people are snatching the copies from my hands.

To have the first printing at Venice without my being able to look after it continually, was an impossibility. God knows what an assiduous watch I have kept over this edition and to what extent I was obliged to modify and eliminate in the proof-sheets; for things appear altogether different in print from what they do in manuscript.

I hear that in France the work of La Croix, annotated by Father Zaccaria, and likewise all the Busenbaums, have been burnt, on account of a certain proposition found in Busenbaum, namely, *licet occidere principem si vult injuste auferre vitam*.[1] However, with the limitation which Busenbaum attaches to it: *nisi timeantur majora incommoda* (these are his words, or, at least, very similar to

[1] On the 5th of January, 1757, a certain François Robert Damiens stabbed Louis XV. as the latter was leaving the Castle of Versailles. The wound inflicted was not mortal, but Damiens was condemned to death for attempted regicide. This man had at one time been in the service of the Jesuits. This, then, was a fine opportunity for the Jansenists to throw the blame of the attack on the Jesuits, and they called the attention of the Parliaments of Toulouse and Paris to this proposition of Busenbaum: *Ad defensionem vitæ et integritatis membrorum licet, etiam filio, religioso et subdito se tueri, si opus sit, cum occisione contra ipsum parentem, abbatem, principem: nisi forte propter mortem hujus secutura essent nimis magna incommoda, ut bella etc.* (lib. iii. dub. iii. n. 8). The work of Busenbaum and those of his commentators were then condemned to be burnt, as if by teaching this proposition they had fomented regicide.

them), the proposition is not at all condemnable. For this very thing, I hear they have burnt the work of La Croix; and for the same reason, they will also burn my book. Take care, then, not to send any copies of it into France.

Please acknowledge the receipt of all that I have written to you. I remain, Illustrious Sir,—Live Jesus, Joseph, and Mary!

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] Send some *Morals* to Naples, for I know certain persons have sought for a copy and could not find any.

The *Compendium* forms a work of three volumes octavo. The price, binding included, is nine *carlini*.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 37.

To the Same.

The saint continues his correspondence on the *Instruction and Practice;* and, seeing him little inclined thereto, endeavors to inculcate on the bookseller the immense utility of printing spiritual books.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, April 14, 1758.

Most Illustrious Sir: I received your most esteemed favor, and I shall at once set about arranging many little points in the *Practice* that need such arrangement. In a very short time, the work will be on its way to you *via* Rome; for to send it by way of Manfredonia, would take too long, seeing that you wish to have it immediately on account of the copyright. For the rest, I beg of you (after you have obtained the copyright) to wait a little before publishing the book. However, I shall be content with

this, that you do not send it into the kingdom of Naples till I authorize it, a thing you promised me in a former letter.

I am working continually at the Latin version of the *Practice*. You do not say one word about the publication of those other little works I sent you. I am, indeed, astonished that you have not as yet printed the work on our Lady, nor that on the Eucharist, that is, the *Visits* together with the *Considerations on the Passion*. Here in Naples the book on our Lady has been given to press a number of times, and has been received with universal favor; whilst that on the Eucharist and the Passion, along with other small treatises, has gone through nine editions in Naples, of more than a thousand copies each. The same work has been printed, also, at Rome in two volumes.

I do not pretend to make any profit out of these books; but I should like to have a single copy of each, in order to see how they are printed. For the rest, I wish for nothing else than the glory of Jesus Christ and Mary. I repeat here what I have so many times written to you: these works will have an immense sale with all classes of people, especially in religious houses. The printer of the *Visits* in Naples has obtained the copyright.

If you see fit to print these works, I beg of you to do it on good paper; it matters little that the price may be somewhat higher.

I have written to you many times about these books, and have received not a single word in answer. I entreat you, to answer, at least, this time; if not, I shall see about giving the charge of publishing them to some one else in Venice.

As regards the large work on *Moral*, I am grieved that I am detained outside of Naples; but for that, I should sell many copies. Do this then for the present: send me thirty

copies, and according as I shall have an opportunity to sell them, I shall send you the money, if this arrangement suits you. You must inform me of the sending of these copies, so that I can make application at the custom house in Naples.

I am at present busily engaged with a work on the Incarnation[1] and the Heart of Jesus. The book seems to me to be an excellent one. I shall not send it to you, however, unless you assure me that you wish to publish it; for I see full well that you are not much inclined to print these spiritual works. The works on *Moral* can be sold only to religious and priests; the spiritual works, however, are bought by every class of people. I really do not understand why you dislike to print them.

Tendering you my most humble respects and recommending myself to your prayers, I remain,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,
of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 38.

To the Same.

He asks the publisher to make inquiries about the *Instruction and Practice*, which the saint had sent to him a long time before, but which he fears may have gone astray.

NAPLES, May 18, 1758.

Most Illustrious Sir: Quite a while ago, I sent my new Italian work enclosed in a small box, by the letter-carrier to Signor Agazzi in Rome. But, notwithstanding that I

[1] *Novena for the Feast of Christmas.*

have written many letters to him, I have received no response. I fear that he is dead, or else resides somewhere outside the city. I am afraid the box containing the book has gone astray, a thing which would grieve me very much, for in the work I sent, there are many corrections and many important additions, which have cost me great labor.

I beg you, therefore, to have a letter written to one of your correspondents at Rome, and see what has become of the said Agazzi. If his whereabouts cannot be discovered, will you have the kindness to see to it that some one of your correspondents gets possession of the box, and forwards it to you? Then inform me of the fact.

The box is marked *No. 12*, and above this number stands written (if I mistake not): *To Sig. Giuseppe Agazzi.*

I await an answer about the matters of which I wrote in my preceding letters.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 39.

To the Same.

The saint speaks of the merits of his new *Practice*, and again inculcates on the publisher the printing of the ascetical works, likewise the publishing of a small dogmatic work. He promises to send a number of additions for a new edition of the *Moral Theology*, and concludes with a few plans for the better regulating of their correspondence.

NOCERA, June 5, 1758.

Most Illustrious Sir: I received your last favor of the 20th of May, and I must needs answer many things contained therein.

I will take the fifty copies of the *Moral Theology* and the copies of the *Practice*, as you wrote to me.

I have received the beginning of the Manual for those about to be ordained,[1] together with the preface by our good Father Zaccaria, who always makes it a point to praise me to excess. The Manual, however, which I have added to the new *Practice* is more copious and better arranged than the earlier work. If you had written to me sooner, I should have asked you to print the later work.

A certain bishop has caused his seminarians to purchase the *Practice*, precisely on account of this Manual being in it. However, what is done, is done; and I thank you for the one hundred copies you intend to send me. The paper is excellent, and the printing could not be better. I should like to have the *Visits to the Blessed Sacrament* and the book on our Lady printed in the same style; but, as I clearly perceive, you always give our Lady and Jesus Christ the last place. For my part, I hold it for certain that these two works would sell a hundred times better than the *Manual* and the *Practice*. I know this by experience,

[1] Published under the title: *Examen Ordinandorum.*

from the numerous editions issued by the Neapolitan booksellers. The *Visits* has up to the present date reached its eleventh edition.

Should you, however, desire to print the *Visits*, since you have waited so long, you can wait a little longer; for I wish to send the latest edition, now being printed, in which I have added many things not found in other editions.

You must not think little of that small work against Materialists and Deists.[1] It may be short, but it is replete with matter; the fact that it can be read very easily, will increase the demand for it. Besides, it has the approbation of distinguished men.

Now we come to what you have written to me. In your letter you say: *I renew my repeated requests to you to make the proper additions and emendations to your Theology, and especially to the propositions condemned in France. I shall transmit to you the corrections now being made by Father Zaccaria.*

I make answer, first, that I have never before received any such request of yours about improvements in the Theology; perhaps, your letter on the subject never reached me. For the rest, I assure you, Sir, that I have made some excellent additions which it would be well to send you. And for that reason I have thought of taking one of the copies of the Theology which you sent me, and inserting at the proper places the additions that belong to them, besides other little points, a good number of which I composed whilst working at the *Practice*.

It is true, many of these I have already introduced into the *Practice;* but it would be very good to insert the same also in the large work of Theology, for I see you are thinking of issuing a new edition of the *Moral Theology* with the propositions, condemned in France, corrected.

1 "A short Dissertation against the Errors of Modern Unbelievers, now-a-days called Materialists and Deists."

These corrections I am waiting to make according as Father Zaccaria shall indicate them; for I myself do not see very well how many and of what kind these propositions are. Two of them have been pointed out to me, and I must say they are really sound doctrine. But we must needs suppress them, since France will have it so.

As regards the *Practice*, I can inform you that the Latin translation is approaching completion. The Italian edition I sent some time ago to Rome to Signor Agazzi; but up to the present I have received no news from him. Fearing that the copy might go astray in the hands of the postman, I have charged some friends of mine to see whether Signor Agazzi is dead or alive. In case he does not care to procure it from the postman, I told them to get it themselves and keep it in safe custody.

I renew my request to you to write to Rome and see what has become of the *Practice* which was confided to the letter-carrier, in a small box, marked *No. 12*, on which was the address, if I mistake not, *To Sig. Giuseppe Agazzi.* Moreover, I beg you to write and inform me whom I should charge with the duty of sending the box from Rome to you, in case Signor Agazzi will not take upon himself the charge of sending it; for to three letters I have written, I have not received from him a single response. For the same reason advise me at the proper time by what way you desire me to despatch to you the *Theology* with corrections and additions; for transmission through Signor Agazzi seems to be a failure. On the other hand, there is a great risk of losing anything I should send *via* Manfredonia. But enough on the matter. Consider yourself how the business may be best accomplished.

Pardon me if I make a suggestion concerning your edition of the *Theology*. The print is excellent, but the large form of the folio does not please me. The division into three volumes makes them too cramped. I should say

that, if you print the work in three volumes quarto, it would look much better and be much more handy to study from. Who knows but one or the other person has not purchased a copy, because he sees it in three volumes of such immense size and at the same time so cramped.

For the rest, do as you think best. I have mentioned the above solely for the sake of giving the book a greater sale; not to speak of the fact that the book, if published in quarto would cost, at least, two *carlini* less. The copies you sent me, I have had made into one volume, and I find the same very handy.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] Let me add a word. Just this morning I received information that Signor Agazzi had obtained the little box containing the book, and that he had already sent it to you. I am now inclined to think that the reason Signor Agazzi sent no answer to my many letters, is, because he never goes to the Naples post-office to get them. But I have now discovered a means of having my letters reach him, namely, by sending them to Signor Agazzi's brother, a member of the Society of Pious Workers. This, then, is my arrangement: everything that I may have to send, I shall continue to transmit through the same Signor Agazzi. But do you take care to instruct him to send on to you without delay all messages I shall despatch. I beg you to wait a little before printing the *Practice* which will presently reach you. I have another very important addition to make. Live Jesus and Mary!

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 40.

To the Same.

The saint thanks him for a work sent to him, and commends the same. He gives an account of some copies of the *Moral Theology* sent to him to be sold, requests certain corrections for the *Moral Theology*, and, having given some instructions concerning the *Instruction and Practice*, he urges the printing of the two smaller works.

NOCERA, July 2, 1758.

Illustrious Sir: I begin this letter by presenting you my most heartfelt thanks for the work of Father Petavius which you sent me. With print so clear, paper so fine, and with so many excellent additions by Father Zaccaria, it is, indeed, a unique work. I repeat it, I thank you a thousand times for sending it to me. I have received the fifty copies of the *Moral Theology*, and have begun to sell them. When the profits from the sale shall have reached a good sum, I shall send it to you, after having deducted therefrom the amount you directed. At the same time I have told the lay-brother [1] whom we retain at Naples, to see that the copies be quickly sold.

The Brother, however, writes to me that the bundle containing the books, has met with an accident, and many leaves have been damaged beyond repair. He has sent me a list of the damaged leaves. Here it is, as it was drawn up by a bookbinder.

In volume i.—folios *H* and *K 2*.

In volume ii.—folios *Aa 2* and *LI 2* are missing.

In volume iii.—folio *R* is missing.

In the same volume iii.—folio *Aa* is missing in eighteen copies.

And again in volume iii.—folio *Bb* is missing in four copies.

[1] Brother Francesco Tartagliore.

The two last-mentioned parts are the most damaged. It will, therefore, be necessary to reprint the pages of these two parts, so as not to have the entire copies spoiled. The injured works I shall lay aside.

I am waiting for the corrections of Father Zaccaria, about which you wrote to me, so that I can have them ready for the new edition you intend to give out. At the same time, I shall send you a number of emendations for the work, which I have already arranged in order; to these I shall join a number of small additions which should find a place in the work. But enough for the present. At the proper time I shall write to you everything minutely, so that you may resolve upon making whatever arrangements you think fit.

The Latin version of the *Practice* is on the road to completion. As regards the Italian *Practice*, I hope that you have received it ere this. Wait a little, however, before giving it to the press, for I must send you various emendations as well as some small additions, which I am busy setting in order. I repeat it, wait a little before printing the work; for if this edition, so much improved and enlarged, should now come out at Venice, I should have great difficulty in selling the copies of the Neapolitan edition that are yet unsold, and which I have had printed at the expense of the Congregation. I have not, however, many copies left to sell, for in a few months I have sold more than I ever expected. I tell you for a fact that I have had not more than fifteen hundred printed.

When will you give me the consolation of being informed that you are printing the work on the Eucharist and Passion, as also the *Glories of Mary?*

I remain, Illustrious Sir,—Live Jesus, Joseph, and Mary!

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] I have been backward in thanking you for the work of Petavius; but I had not noticed the announcement that you were going to send it, as it was written on the back of your letter.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 41.

To the Same.

He warns the publisher against certain unfavorable talk that might come to his ears, and returns to the topic of the emendations, likewise of the publishing of the two ascetical works. He gives notice, also, of some ascetical works he had composed or was composing. These latter he wishes the publisher to have printed.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, July 16, 1758.

Most Illustrious Sir: I write to inform you that two or three years ago, when you wrote to me that you desired to have the *Compendium of Moral*, but in Latin, I wrote to Signor Don Bartolomeo Carminati, Rector of S. Paolo, to have some firm print the Italian edition.

To-day I have received a letter from Signor Antonio Zatta, who writes to me to send him the *Compendium* for publication. I have answered him that, in the interim you had ordered me to send you not only the Latin *Compendium*, but also the Italian one; and that, as I had already forwarded it to you, I was unable to do anything for him.

I have made it a point to write all this, so that in case you chance to hear some talk of my *Compendium's* being printed by others, you will know what has been done about the matter and what precaution I have taken. My second reason is, to warn you to hasten with the copyright,

knowing that others have the intention of printing the work.

I pray you, however, to delay printing it for some time; for I am putting together many points, partly emendations, partly additional matter, for the work. They are all very useful and important.

As regards the Latin translation, I am working at it all along. Not much remains to be done.

I am waiting for the corrections of Father Zaccaria on Busenbaum, that is to say, on the large Moral work. I shall arrange them in order, as you direct me, and with them I shall send some other points to be added. But I have written to you many letters, and have not received a word in answer to them. I entreat you to send me an answer. I especially beg you to send me word whether you intend to give to press the work on our Lady, that I sent you, as likewise the small book of the *Visits* and *Passion*. At least, signify to me your intentions in this matter; for if you do not propose to print them, I shall send them to Signor Zatta, who has written to me concerning them. This, however, I should not like to do without your permission. Once more, I repeat, I feel it my duty to have these two small works printed, for the glory of Jesus Christ and his Most Holy Mother Mary. And I know for certain, they will everywhere be received with great favor and have a ready sale. Anything further I do not desire.

I remain

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] I am at present engaged in the composition of two other works, one on the Infant Jesus, which includes *Discourses for the Novena* [*and the Feast of Christmas*], besides *Meditations for the whole of Advent to the Octave*

of the Epiphany. To these are added the *Novena to the Heart of Jesus*, the *Septenary of St. Joseph*,[1] and a little treatise for priests, entitled: "Preparation for Mass and Thanksgiving, for Every Day in the Week."

The second work consists of forty considerations, or, if you like, sermons on the eternal truths,[2] together with "Nine Discourses for the Time of Public Calamity." Both books are now being printed.

Inform me, if you desire to have them; I shall send them to you, but not before I have sold a good number of copies. However, I have had only a few printed. But I say it once more, I see that you have very little attraction for my spiritual works.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 42.

To the Same.

In this letter the saint repeats many things already written to the publisher, having received from the latter a reply in which no mention had been made of these things. He then congratulates himself that, at last, his cherished spiritual works are being printed, and gives some instruction about them. He closes by informing the publisher of several other works.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, August, 1758.

Most Illustrious Sir: I received your favor of the 15th of July, together with the catalogue of the works printed at

[1] "Meditations in Honor of St. Joseph, for the Seven Wednesdays preceding his Feast."

[2] "Preparation for Death, or Considerations on the Eternal Truths, Useful for All as Meditations and Serviceable to Priests for Sermons."

your establishment. You may rest assured I shall let my friends see it, in order that they may inform themselves of the books they desire.

I have read the entire letter. I see with astonishment not a single word of answer to the three other letters that I wrote to you, nor do you say anything as to whether you have received the three volumes of the *Compendium*, otherwise called *Practice*. And still I informed you some time ago that Signor Agazzi had sent them to you.

At the same time I wrote to you that Signor Zatta had pressed me to send him the said *Compendium* for publication; but I answered him that I had already sent it to you, and that I could not go back on my word.

I wrote also that I was waiting for Father Zaccaria's corrections of the large work of *Moral*, and that I had already marked down many useful points to be added to the *Moral Theology*, as well as to the *Compendium*.

I asked you, moreover, whether you intended to publish the *Visits* and the work on our Lady, both of which I sent you. If you had no such intention, I said I would give them to Signor Zatta for publication. The Latin translation of the *Practice* is now approaching completion.

I am now condensing as succinctly as possible, all that I wrote at length in the three above-mentioned letters. I beg you to give me an answer to each particular point, so as not to leave me in perplexity.

As I wrote in a preceding letter, I would have you tell me if it is your desire that I send the Latin *Compendium*, and the additions I have for the Italian *Compendium*, through Signor Agazzi *via* Rome (for I have discovered a secure means of having my messages delivered to the said Signor Agazzi), or whether you wish me to send them by another route. For these works are of such a nature that I could not undertake them again without extreme difficulty, in case they should go astray. What I have to send being

manuscript, I must needs send by water, for the mail-carrier will not take manuscripts. Meantime, I beg you to write immediately to Signor Agazzi, and tell him that, as soon as he receives my manuscripts, he should forward them to you.

I am just now engaged in putting together the additions that I had marked down for the Italian *Practice;* and this, because on reading the catalogue you sent me, I perceived that work in the list of books in press. Seeing this, I feared that you might have it printed before I sent these additions. But I pray God that this may not be the case, since these additions treat of most important points. I hope for this the more on account of the fact that in the catalogue it is announced that your addition will be considerably augmented. The additions to the Latin *Practice* I shall join to the manuscript I have to send you, and, as soon as completed, I shall despatch them to you through the same medium of Agazzi.

Gloria Patri! I have, at last, read in the catalogue that the *Glories of Mary* and the *Visits* are in press. I have received great consolation from this news on account of the glory which will accrue therefrom to Jesus Christ and to Mary. These two books once printed, I shall not ask for more than a single copy of each to see how they are done. You will use, I trust, good paper for them. It does not matter that they shall cost a little more; for these small books have as ready a sale when good paper is used, even though they may be a little more expensive.

I see, also, in your catalogue that you make mention of the *Visits* only, and not a word is said of the other little treatises belonging to it, which treatises have, perhaps, been more favorably received by the public; I mean *The Passion, The Will of God* and *Prayer*. I am inclined to think that your intention was to indicate the contents of the

first part only. But do not omit those of the second part; for in Naples, Rome, and Sicily, this little work was printed entire, the second part included.

The book against Materialists and Deists is, indeed, of small compass; but you must know that it has met with great success, being the very quintessence of many larger volumes that I have read.

That other work of mine on *Christmas*, and the *Heart of Jesus*, together with the *Preparation for Mass for the Use of Priests*, will soon appear. As soon as it is printed, I shall send it to you. I shall do in like manner with my other work on the *Eternal Truths*, which is now in press. This latter is a work that cost me much labor.

Once more, I entreat you to put off for some time the printing of the *Practice*, until I send you the above-mentioned additions, as also a leaf printed lately, which must be added to the work. I wish to see in what manner, and by what route I can send them. I shall then despatch them without delay.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most devoted and very obliged servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the edition published at Bassano in the year 1879, on the occasion of the installation of the Very Rev. Pietro Colbachini as Archpriest of Cereda.

LETTER 43.

To the Same.

He informs the publisher of the despatch of the additions, and makes known his wishes concerning the printing of the *Instruction and Practice*. He speaks, also, about the Latin translation of the same (*Homo Apostolicus*), and about another work that he recommends for publication.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, August 10, 1758.

Most Illustrious Sir: In my last letter I wrote to you of my perplexity as to how to send you the additions to the Italian *Practice*. I finally determined on sending them by post. I beg you, as soon as you receive them, to inform me of the fact, so as to free me from anxiety, and that I may not be obliged to send a second copy of the same. They are really most useful points, I may even say necessary, having come to my mind after my own edition had been already finished.

I entreat you not to set to work at the *Practice* till I shall tell you. I am not so particular as to whether you print it now, if only you do not send it (until I say so) into the kingdom of Naples and Sicily; for only in Naples and Sicily can I sell the copies I have had printed. But if your edition should appear with so many additions, everybody would buy your copies, whilst mine would lie on my hands. Therefore, if you do print the work, send it everywhere but to Naples and Sicily.

The Latin translation is, as I said in a preceding letter, on the road to completion. It costs us much labor and time, since everything must be copied by hand; besides, all the additions that I am sending to you, must be inserted, each in its proper place.

In a preceding letter I also wrote to you how rejoiced I felt when I read in the catalogue, that you were printing

the *Glories of Mary*, and the *Visits to the Blessed Sacrament;* but by no means neglect to print the second part, also, of the *Visits*, that is to say, *The Passion*, *The Will of God*, and *Prayer*, as they are excellent little treatises. At the same time I asked you not to omit publishing the work against Materialists and Deists; for this book has received great commendation here, and but few copies remain to me.

In regard to the additions that I sent, it will be necessary for the compositor and the reviser to take great pains to put everything where it belongs; the more so, as they are written in very minute character, in order to diminish the expense of transmission, which is, indeed, quite considerable.

As to the little treatise on the *Cusing of the Dead*, lately composed by me, I have marked the place where it should be inserted. Leave out the old one that stands at the end of the first volume of the *Practice*. This new dissertation on the subject is short, but it has cost me no little labor.

Let me know whether you have received the Italian *Practice;* for I have read the catalogue very carefully, and up to the present I have not receivcd any indication from you as to whether it has reached you or not.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and truly devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 44.

To the Same.

He laments over the delay to which their letters and messages are subjected, and gives further instructions for the better arrangement of the edition of the *Instruction and Practice*, as well as of the ascetical works.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, September 11, 1758.

Most Illustrious Sir: I received your favor of the 26th of August, in which I am informed that you had written quite a number of letters to me though at the time that I wrote my last, I had not received a single one of them. Our correspondence must be detained in some unknown corner, for I see that you do not receive my letters, whilst many months usually elapse before I receive those you send me. I do not understand this, for very often I receive your letters immediately. Your letters to me seem to have the worse fortune.

Having discovered from the letter preceding your last that you had commenced to print the *Instruction*,[1] I at once despatched the additions destined for the work, enclosing them in a letter, as they were not much of a package. They could, indeed, be enclosed in one envelope, but they are none the less important. I also joined to them a little dissertation on the *Cursing of the Dead* which I composed and had printed only recently.

I am sorry that up to the 26th of August, on which date you wrote to me, you had not yet received the letter. I hope that by the time this letter reaches you, you will have received it. Seeing that you had already set to work at

[1] The saint here speaks of the Italian work, entitled: "Instruction and Practice for Confessors," which he often refers to as the large *Practice*.

the printing, I hastened to send you the additions enclosed in a letter, nor did I mind the expense of postage (which here in Naples is considerable), provided they might quickly and securely reach their destination. I did not forward them to Signor Agazzi, for our mail-carrier refuses to take manuscripts. Hence I should have been obliged to send them by a sailing-vessel; but to wait for it much precious time would have been lost.

In the same letter, I also wrote that in case you should have printed the pages to which the additions belong, you should, at least, have them printed at the end of the volume, with a note telling where they should have been placed. The places for them were marked very distinctly by myself. This arrangement will be the more necessary from the fact that a few additions belong to the first volume, though these are of greater length than the others; no inconvenience, therefore, will be caused by having them placed as notes at the end of the volume.

The greater number, on the other hand, belong to the second volume. I hope that this second volume has not as yet been printed; but in case it has, the only thing left is to put the additions at the end.

I entreat you to write at once when you receive this, and inform me whether you have received the letter of which I just spoke, together with the additions it contained. For if it has gone astray, I shall have a new copy of the additions made, as they are all very important. Meantime, you have certainly begun to print the work and make use of the copyright; you can, therefore, suspend the printing until you receive these additions.

As regards the Latin *Compendium*, I am working steadily at it. I am grieved that Father Don Girolamo [Ferrara], the companion who assists me (for you must know I am an old man and my head gives me much trouble), has fallen sick, but at present he is much better. I am continually

urging him to hurry up and finish this work. I have in readiness the other additions to the large work on *Moral*, for the time when you will send me the corrections of Father Zaccaria.

I received the title-pages; but in the one of *The Passion*, I do not see any indication of the treatise on *The Will of God*, or of that other on *Prayer*, though these very treatises are, perhaps, the more useful, as well as the more sought after. I beg you by all means to have the titles of these two added.

Yes, for the future I shall send my other small works to you through Signor Agazzi.

Accept my most humble respects.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and truly devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original belonging to the Gamba Collection in the municipal library of Bassano (Venice).

LETTER 45.

To the Same.

He informs the publisher that he will soon send the Latin translation of the *Practice* (*Homo Apostolicus*), and gives some points for the edition of this work, as well as some general instructions on the mode of making corrections.

Live Jesus, Joseph, and Mary!

NOCERA, October 7, 1758.

Most Illustrious Sir: I write to tell you that in a few days I shall send to Rome, to Signor Agazzi, the Latin transla-

tion. It is now nearly completed, and I am making all haste to finish it as soon as possible, so as to be able to despatch it by the sailing-vessel before winter sets in. I tell you of this beforehand, that you may instruct Signor Agazzi to forward to you the box containing my manuscript as soon as it comes into his hands.

I will make another remark in advance.

As you will have observed, the *Manual for Those about to be Ordained*, found in the third volume (appendix iii.) of the Italian *Practice* which I have already sent you, is in Latin. It would, then, be a good thing if you would print the pages destined for the Italian edition at the same time as those destined for the Latin, since they are both written in the same manner. I say this to save you the trouble of setting up the type twice.

There is one difficulty, however, connected with this plan. I refer to the paging. The pages of the Italian edition do not correspond to those of the Latin. It would be necessary, then, before printing the pages of the *Manual* belonging to the third volume, to wait until you are printing the Latin edition; after all, it is only a matter of about eight folios. I make this observation that you may regulate the matter as seems best to you.

In making the corrections, I beg you to take pains to verify very carefully the numbering of the citations; for if this is not done, the reviser will never be able to detect the errors that have crept in.

Your last favor contained a note from the reviser. He asked me, and rightly, about two passages in the Italian *Practice* which he did not find correctly indicated in the leaf of additions. I confess, the marking was inexact. In my last letter I pointed out the proper places for the two

notes in question; but to make sure, in case that letter did not reach you, I add the enclosed note.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most devoted and very obedient servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 46.

To the Same.

He notifies him by what way he will send the *Homo Apostolicus*. He proposes to him to print the *Novena for Christmas* and the *Eternal Truths*.

Live Jesus, Joseph, and Mary!

NOCERA, October 15, 1758.

(*Another letter, the counterpart of this, has already been sent to you by post.*)

Most Illustrious Sir: To-morrow, without fail, I shall forward the Latin *Practice* to Rome to Signor Agazzi, for I have just received word that the vessel destined for Rome will leave in a very short time. I beg you to send word to Signor Agazzi at once, to forward the box containing the manuscripts as soon as he receives it.

You will find in the box the *Novena for Christmas*, which I published recently. If you desire to print it, I beg you to delay sending it into the kingdom of Naples for some time, until I have sold my own copies, which are not many. I sell them at twenty-four *grains*, about two *lire* of your money.

Signor Antonio Zatta lately wrote, asking me to send him this work, that he might print it as also the *Eternal Truths*. This latter is in press, and is now nearing completion. But I begged to be excused, saying that I had

pledged myself to send these two works to you. If, however, you do not intend to publish them, I wish you would let me know; since in that case, I shall have to send them to Signor Zatta.

I beg you to print the above-mentioned Latin *Practice* as soon as possible, both because it is in greater demand at Naples than the Italian edition, as only this Latin edition can be used by the young men in the seminaries, and also because some bishops are already waiting for it.

I beg you, in order to set my mind at rest, to send me word as soon as you have received the above-mentioned Latin translation, for this is a work which I could hardly undertake a second time.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and grateful servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 47.

To the Same.

Also pertaining to the sending of the *Homo Apostolicus*, of which he asks him to acknowledge the receipt in due time.

[November 1758.]

Most Illustrious Sir: This morning I received a letter from Signor Giuseppe Agazzi. He informs me that he has already received the manuscript of the *Compendium* together with the *Novena for Christmas*, which I sent you. He requests me to inform you immediately of the fact, since, as he says, he despatched it to you promptly by mail.

I beg of you, for my greater peace of mind, to send me word as soon as you receive the box. I have already written many letters to you on this point, but until now I have received no answer.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 48.

To the Same.

He asks him to print the *Homo Apostolicus* without delay, and, after thanking him for the present of several small books, promises him other works for the press. He mentions a few of them, briefly touching upon the importance of each, and concludes with some remarks on the notes to be added to the *Moral.*

Live Jesus, Joseph, and Mary!

NOCERA, December 31, 1758.

Most Illustrious Sir: After long waiting, I have been comforted to-day by the receipt of your esteemed letter, from which I see that you have received the package containing the *Compendium.*

I beg you to print it soon. It will have a rapid sale even at Naples, where it is in demand for the seminaries which want the Latin and not the Italian edition.

As I wrote before, I hope the reviser will be careful, for the manuscript is not in good handwriting. You will, also, tell him to keep before his eyes the *Compendium* in the vernacular lately published by you. In this way, he can the more easily clear up the difficulties he may find in the manuscript.

I thank you very much for the present you make me of the small works and of the Directory.[1] Truly, I am overcome by your great generosity. I am sorry that I am now approaching the end of my days, and that my head is giving out, for I should wish to devote myself to writing other works, if it were only to second your desires. But enough. If I ever undertake another work, I shall not fail to send it to you.

For the present I have finished the book on *Death*, otherwise called the *Eternal Truths*, a work useful to seculars for meditations and serviceable to priests for preaching.[2] At the end of the book there are nine *Discourses for Times of Calamity*. This work has been very favorably received, so much so that it hardly made its appearance, when it already passed out of my hands. I had, however, but a small number of copies printed, because I have very little money. I do not send it to you as yet, for I intend to forward it with the book [*The Great Means*] *of Prayer*, which has not yet been printed, but is now in press. This work on *Prayer* is a unique and most useful book. It is not only an ascetical work, a book of spirituality, but it is a theological work, one to which I devoted a great deal of labor, for in it I refute the system of Father Berti, against whom Reverend Father Zaccaria has written so well. Father Zaccaria urged me very much to publish this work, and now, thanks be to God, I have finished it. I hope it will be well received by all, save the partisans of Berti.

By this time you will have received, together with the Latin *Compendium*, the *Novena for Christmas* and the other smaller works that accompany it. This Novena has

1 "Directory, or, Manual for Those about to be Ordained."

2 The title is as follows: "Preparation for Death, or, Considerations on the Eternal Truths, Useful for All as Meditations, and Serviceable to Priests for Sermons."

had a rapid sale here, and I have received orders from Sicily for many copies. But I have had only a few printed.

As regards the large work on theology, I am waiting for the corrections which, you wrote me, are to be made by Father Zaccaria. For the rest, my additions are all in readiness.

I have already written to you to find out which you would prefer: that I take one of the copies of your edition and insert therein the additions in their respective places, that thus the reviser might have less trouble, or that I send them all to you in a separate book. Let me know which you prefer. To send the additions in one of your copies, would make it more easy for reprinting; but it would entail greater expense.

The books I have already spoken of, I shall send to you by the courier through Signor Agazzi. As regards your letters to me, send them to Signor Michele Stasi. By passing through his hands, I shall, perhaps, receive them with greater security.

Live Jesus, Joseph, and Mary!

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and very grateful servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After a copy printed at Bassano in the year 1879, on the occasion of the solemn installation of the Very Rev. Pietro Colbachini as Archpriest of Cereda.

LETTER 49.

To the Same.

He tells him why he does not wish to send his works for the first print, and speaks of those works that are to be reprinted, or are already in press.

Live Jesus, Joseph, and Mary!

From the Mission at NOLA, February 10, 1759.

Most Illustrious Sir: I now answer your favor of January 27.

As to sending my works to your establishment for the first press, I say: Would to God that we were nearer to each other and that the thing could be done! But it is impossible. I am very exact in my work. I am never satisfied with what I have written. It is for this reason, that I make numberless corrections in the proofs. It is, indeed, quite a different thing to read the matter in manuscript and to read it in print. If I submit my original manuscript to many revisions, I am compelled to make numerous and lengthy corrections in the proofs. I am wont to change entire periods. In some parts, I often change more than I leave.

I have not as yet sent the book on *Death*, printed a short time ago, since I expect to forward it to you together with the work on *Prayer*, which is shorter, though more elaborate. At present I am reviewing the last pages. I shall complete the work during the coming week. I am now writing to Signor Agazzi, that, for the future, he may be more careful about the mail and courier at Rome. I beg you, also, to write to him that he may show greater anxiety about these things. I have written to him several times, but have not received a single answer. I think he is wont to give little attention to the mail from Naples.

With regard to the reprinting of the large *Moral*, I shall,

as you suggest, write the additions in one of the copies printed by you, and be careful to add the notes on the propositions proscribed in France.

I am not, however, perfectly acquainted with all these propositions. I know but two of them, namely; that on self-defence at the price of the death of a prince (which occurs in Busenbaum, *l. 3, tract. iv. cap. i. dub. 3, n. 8*), and that on proscribed exiles.

If you ascertain from your censors the nature and number of these propositions condemned in France, please notify me at once. I shall do my utmost to learn them from the Jesuit Fathers in Naples.

I am anxiously waiting for the news that the *Compendiums of Moral* have been printed; but those which I am more anxiously expecting, are the Latin *Compendiums*. If you make me a present of a few of them, I shall be very grateful. But if need be, I am ready to purchase them as soon as they are printed, since I want them for the students of our Congregation, who will be pleased to make their studies from this Latin *Compendium*. I hope to be able to sell many copies of it in Naples among the seminaries, in which the Latin edition is preferred to the vernacular.

I send you enclosed a small note, or addition, to be appended to the Italian *Compendium*, in case appendix iii. (*Manual for Those about to be Ordained*) has not yet been printed. If, however, the printing of the Italian *Compendium* is already finished, you will, at least, insert the note in the Latin edition, as it would prove very useful, at least for the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily.

When I come home from the missions, I shall devote myself to the work of arranging all the additions I have prepared for the larger work on theology, and send them to you by Signor Agazzi. But you must inform him of this, as well as of that other matter I referred to above.

I wish to know whether you have printed the *Glories of Mary*.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] I add in conclusion, that I have decided to send you at once the *Preparation for Death*, without waiting for the completion of the work on *Prayer*. This work on *Death* has been received with great favor at Naples. Hardly was it published, but without the protection of the copyright, as I am told, when a Neapolitan house wished to reprint it. I shall try to prevent this, and, therefore, I shall send it at once to Rome. Notify Agazzi of the fact without delay.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 50.

To the Same.

He speaks of some corrections to be made in a certain book, of the additions for the large *Moral*, and asks information about two works he desires to have printed without delay.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

From the Mission at NOLA, February 15, 1759.

Most Illustrious Sir: Last week I wrote to you that in answer to your urgent solicitation, I had despatched to you through Signor Agazzi the work on *Death*. I addressed a similar letter to that gentleman.

I have discovered that I could not deliver the box containing the book to the courier last week, since he had already departed. This week, however, it shall certainly

be sent. Please inform Signor Agazzi of the fact, that he may transmit it to you at once.

At the end of the book, after the *Discourses on Public Calamities* and certain teaching pertaining to the same subject, you will find, on page 523, a list of the works published by me. Then follow the *Acts for Each Day of the Week* and the *Protestation for a Good Death;* at the end is an additional sheet on the *Rule of Life*. In regard to these things, I desire you to put them into better order. Place the *Rule of Life* first, then the *Acts* and the *Protestation*, and, at the end, the list of my works.

Once I return home from the missions, I shall work at the additions for the large *Moral* and annotate the propositions condemned in France; but as I am not acquainted with all these propositions, I have sent to Naples for the necessary information. If you can get it yourself where you are, send it to me.

I again ask you to send me word as soon as you have printed the Italian and, more especially, the Latin *Compendiums;* because, as I wrote in my last letter, I am anxiously waiting for them, both for the students of my Congregation and, also, for others. I expect to sell a great number in the seminaries in this kingdom alone, not to speak of other places. These *Compendiums* are much better than those printed at Naples. Live Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and Teresa!

Accept, Illustrious Sir, my most humble salutations.

Your very devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] Address your letters to me, as usual: *Nocera via Naples;* but, perhaps, it would be better to send them to me through Signor Stasi.

After an old copy.

LETTER 51.

To the Same.

He speaks of some books received, of the new edition of the large *Moral*, and of other works to be printed.

NAPLES, March 10, 1759.

Most Illustrious Sir: I hope by this time you have received the *Preparation for Death*, as I sent it to Signor Agazzi quite a while ago, that he might forward it to you as soon as possible.

I have not yet been able to receive the package containing the one hundred copies of the *Visits*, which you were so kind as to send me. They tell me the vessel has not yet reached Manfredonia.

I am now arranging the large *Moral*. It will, however, require some time to finish the work, there are so many additions to be made.

I have obtained here at Naples the propositions of Busenbaum condemned by the Parliaments of France. We came to the same conclusion as Father Zaccaria (whom I lately consulted), that it would be better to exclude these propositions of Busenbaum altogether from the text. We shall thus rid ourselves entirely of all fear of seeing the work prohibited.[1] I am selling the remaining copies of the large *Moral* which you sent me some time ago.

If the first volume of the Latin *Practice* has not yet been printed, insert at the end the little slip here enclosed.

I beg you to send me word when you intend to begin the reprinting of the large *Moral*, that I may regulate myself accordingly. If you do not intend to begin soon, it will be

[1] These propositions were, in fact, eliminated. In all subsequent editions we can find no trace of them. The first of these propositions we have already touched upon in a note to Letter 36, page 79. The other two the reader will find hinted at further on in the letter of November 14, 1759, Letter 60, page 128.

better for me to send you the book with additions only when the reprinting is about to commence, since I shall always find something new to add.

I have just received your letter of the 3d of March. I thank you very much for the fifty copies of the Italian *Practice* that you sent me. Would you be so kind as to inform me by what route I am to receive them.

I am very glad that the Latin *Practice*, which I, as well as many others, am anxiously expecting, is now in press.

I am spending a few days at Naples, and have had an opportunity of speaking at length with Father Zaccaria. I shall visit him once more, and tender him your regards.

The book [*The Great Means*] *of Prayer* will come from the press this week, and next Saturday, without fail, I shall despatch it by the courier to Signor Agazzi. I have already sent him the other work, the *Preparation for Death;* but he has not yet informed me whether he has received it.

I beg you to tell him this yourself, as he has written to me that you have sent him no information on the matter.

I see that this *Practice* in quarto will turn out to be an excellent edition, and one very handy for the reader. As regards the copies of my edition, I have sold nearly all in a very short time.

I remain

Your humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] I should be much pleased if you would let me know who is the author of the anonymous *Parenetic Letter* against Father Plazza, which was printed by you.

I have had a little time at my disposal and have made use of it to arrange in the large *Moral* almost all the additions I had marked out for it, inserting each in its proper

place. I shall send it to you as soon as I have finished, without waiting for an answer.

I beg you again, and it is the wish of others also, to see that it be printed in quarto, as it would be far more handy for the reader. It might be arranged in three or four volumes. Live Jesus and Mary!

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 52.

To the Same.

He sends the work entitled: *The Great Means of Prayer*, and explains to him its importance. He also communicates a secret appertaining to him.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, April 5, 1759.

Most Illustrious Sir: I send you my book on *Prayer*, the last work I have composed. It is more theological than ascetical. The second part especially is theological, and has cost me many months of labor. I am sending it by the courier to Signor Giuseppe Agazzi, whom I have already informed of its departure.

I have almost finished the additions and other emendations destined for the large *Moral;* only a few things are still left to arrange. I expect to be able to send it to you about the beginning of May, through a friend who has to go to Rome, and who will deliver it to Signor Agazzi.

I have had several conversations with Father Zaccaria at Naples. He is truly a man of great distinction.

He harbors a suspicion that you give very little attention to his affairs, and this, perhaps, at the instigation of Father Berti. I tell you this in confidence, and I beg you, therefore, not to use my name in connection with this subject

before any one. As a true friend and servant, I have your interests at heart, and I do not think it will turn out to your advantage to neglect Father Zaccaria.

When I have finished arranging the large *Moral*, I shall send you another letter, already begun, with further instructions concerning the additions for this work.

I hear that the package containing the books which you have had the kindness to send me, has already arrived at Rome; but I have received nothing as yet, neither the *Visits*, nor the Italian *Practices*.

Let me know how the Latin *Practice* is progressing, since we are waiting for it here with impatience.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and very grateful servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 53.

To the Same.

He thanks him for the present of some books, informs him of an opportunity to sell the Italian *Practice* at Naples, and recommends him to print the *Homo Apostolicus* without delay and on good paper.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, April 12 [1759].

Most Illustrious Sir: Last week I received all the books you had the kindness to present to me. I again thank you very much for your generosity.

As regards the *Practices*, you may now send them to Naples for sale, as the number of my copies is fast diminishing. If you desire to send me some copies, do so; for I

shall endeavor to sell them in our houses, whither a great number of priests betake themselves for the spiritual exercises. Let me know the price.

This morning I received another order for the Latin *Practice* from a seminary. I again beg you to hasten with it as much as possible, since, as I wrote to you, the seminaries have no use for the Italian *Practice*.

I beg you, in case the printing is not yet begun, to use good paper for the work. It matters little that the price be raised. The type you use is excellent, and when the paper is white, you know the type will stand out with great clearness, and the purchasers will not mind paying a higher price.

Send me word as to when the Latin *Practice* will be finished, that I may be able to give an answer to the seminaries that have asked me for the work.

The large *Moral*, with its additions and emendations, is almost completed, and about the month of July I shall send it to you through Signor Agazzi. Please inform him of this.

I have already sent you the book on *Prayer* through the same medium. Let me know whether you have received it.

I am at present composing a book for priests' retreats.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 54.

To the Same.

He speaks again of the printing and sale of some works, and gives him a proof of great respect and affection.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, April 26, 1759.

Most Illustrious Sir: Your esteemed letter, which I received this morning, found me working at the additions for the *Moral*. Rest assured, these additions are new and useful.

Since you tell me to arrange the work at my leisure, and that you are in no hurry to reprint it, I shall send it to you about the month of July or August, as I do not wish to wait until the bad weather sets in. I shall, however, send it sooner if you so desire.

You say nothing about the Latin *Practice*, how it is progressing, though, as I have already written to you, many are anxiously awaiting it here in this kingdom, especially in the seminaries, in which the *Practice* in the vernacular is not permitted to be used. I beg you to push the printing as much as possible.

As regards the size of the *Moral*, do as you please. But I repeat, all prefer it in quarto, since in folio it is very unhandy for reading. You might make four volumes quarto, which would be very handy, and then raise the price.

As regards the copies of the other *Moral* printed by you, I am selling them here, but very slowly. I am away from Naples, and besides I understand very little of such business.

I thank you very much for the books which, as I see from your letter, you sent me. According to your advice,

I shall come to an understanding about them with Signor Matteo Ernandez, of Manfredonia.

The work on *Prayer*, I have already sent you through Signor Agazzi. Let me know whether you have received it. In case you have not, I shall send you another copy.

This book on *Prayer* was read by Father Zaccaria, and pleased him very much, especially the second part, which is entirely theological. It is selling well here at Naples.

As to the *Preparation for Death*, I have sold so many copies in a short time that I have not many remaining. I am desirous to have you reprint it, and I thank you for your promise to send me some copies. I shall do my utmost to further the sale of your editions of my works. It was for this reason that I gave no ear to publishers in Venice who desired to print my books.

As regards the anonymous work against Father Plazza, Father Zaccaria has spoken to me about it. Speaking of Father Zaccaria, I again tell you that he complains of your attending rather to the works of Father Berti than to his. I beg you not to cause him any more displeasure.

Accept, Illustrious Sir, my most sincere regards.

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] One word more in reference to the sale of my works. Let me sell off the remaining copies of those on *Death* and *Prayer* which I have still on hand. I shall then ask you to send me a good number of copies, at the same price as that for which you will give them to Stasi. I shall have them sold during the retreats we give in our houses.

As to the large *Moral*, we can sell but few copies in the country places in which we reside, since our people do not care to lay out much money. But the smaller works, of

which I have spoken, as also the *Practice*, or *Compendium*, are being bought by everybody. I beg you, therefore, to send me a good number of the *Compendiums*, as I shall soon begin to sell them; moreover, I shall, perhaps, sell for you a still greater number of the Latin *Practices*, for which reason, I again entreat you to hasten the printing.

The book on *Prayer* (since you desire to know the prices fixed by me) I have fixed at fifteen *grains;* but some tell me this is too little and, in truth, it is so. However, I chose this price purposely, because it was my wish to give the book a rapid and extensive circulation, with which end in view, I have sent many copies to Rome and Sicily. Live Jesus and Mary!

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 55.

To the Same.

He sends him the large *Moral* for the fourth edition, and gives some points and rules for the arranging of the additions as well as of the volume itself. He speaks, also, of other works.

Live Jesus, Joseph, and Mary!

[May 1759.]

Most Illustrious Sir: Yesterday evening I received two letters from you at the same time.

I shall send you the large *Moral* this week. I did not send it sooner for the reason that, in your first letter, you did not urge me to do so. No time, however, has been lost, for in the interim, I added some very useful matter. I now hasten to send it to you, and for that purpose I shall despatch it to his Eminence, Cardinal

Priuli.[1] I shall write to his Eminence, and, meanwhile, you can do the same.

I delayed sending the *Moral* to you, because I am just now finishing a short, but very elaborate dissertation on the prohibition of books by the Church, a prohibition most necessary in our days. It is impossible for me to finish this work so soon; but as soon as I have finished it, I shall send it to you, that you may insert it in its proper place, in case that part of the book has not yet been printed. If, however, it has already been printed, it matters little, as you can insert it at the end. At the place in which it should have been inserted, that is, in the second treatise *de Legibus*, I shall add a note to the effect that the reader will find this dissertation at the end of the book.

When you have received the book with the additions, look at the beginning where the title-page stands. There you will find a long list of remarks to be taken into account for this new edition.

I thank you very much for the fifty copies of the *Preparation for Death*. I shall have all the copies sold that you send me, and of which you give me the list.

You did well to send me the prices. I shall forward the money to you according as I sell the books. But we must now wait until the time for the spiritual exercises given in our houses. I shall then have an opportunity of selling them. The exercises commence about November or December, but you have done well to send the books in advance.

It is true, Signor Stasi printed the *Visits*, but it was quite a while ago, and on poor paper. I hear that he has also printed the *Glories of Mary*, equally on poor paper and with poor type.

I wish you to know that he is not printing these works on any order from me, but of his own accord, and I cannot

[1] Cardinal Priuli was Bishop of Vicenza.

prevent him from doing so. I am even displeased that he is printing them, since his editions are miserable on account of the paper and the type. It is a shame. On the other hand, I wish to inform you that after I have once printed a work, I never issue a second edition of the same myself; but I must have the first edition printed here, as I make innumerable corrections and changes while it is in the press.

I am glad that you have commenced printing the Latin *Practice*, since, as I told you, everybody here is waiting for it. I beg you to hasten it as much as possible. As soon as it is finished, send me a large number of copies, and indicate the price.

You must not begin to print the large *Moral* until you receive my copy, that is, the annotated work which I shall send you. From the very title-page, there is much need of correction.

I am equally pleased to hear that you have received the book on *Prayer*. The work has met with much praise from the learned.

As regards the new edition of the *Moral*, reflect whether it would not be well to print it in quarto. It could be put up in four volumes, and would thus be much more convenient to read. Do as seems best to you.

I conclude, tendering you my most sincere regards.

Let me know whether you have printed the *Glories of Mary*. I saw it announced in the catalogue you sent me. To relieve my anxiety, tell me whether it has appeared or not.

I am, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 56.

To the Same.

After saying a few things of his larger work on *Moral*, and of the sale of other books, he recommends the early reprint of a work most dear to him.

Live Jesus, Joseph, and Mary!

NOCERA DE' PAGANI, July 5, 1759.

Most Illustrious Sir: Very recently I received two more letters from you, and in one of them I found the invoice of the books.

I have already sent to Naples by a Brother the large *Moral Theology* with the numerous additions belonging to it. I have given directions to the Brother to send it by water to Rome to his Eminence, Cardinal Priuli, to whom, as a matter of politeness, I have also written. See that the work be procured from the said Lord Cardinal, in Rome, where the ship will arrive within a few days after leaving Naples.

You need have no anxiety concerning the propositions condemned in France; I have arranged them in the book in a suitable manner.

Regarding the books which you sent to me to have sold, I shall regulate myself according to what you wrote me in a former letter, that is, I shall dispose of them at a discount of twenty-five per cent. If I mistake, let me know, for I shall be guided by your wishes.

You will have to wait some time for the sale, as we shall have no retreats before winter sets in, and, besides, I have still on hand some copies of my edition of the *Preparation for Death* which must first be disposed of.

I told you in my last letter, and I now repeat, that I hear you are printing every one of my books except the *Glories of Mary*, though that little work is the most elab-

orate, and, perhaps, the most popular of all. As I mentioned before, three successive editions have already appeared at Naples. It is for the glory of our Lady and for no other reason, that I wish you to print this work first, and, I assure you, it will meet with favor everywhere.

Let the nuns of Venice see the little book of *Visits*. Here in the kingdom, there is hardly a nun who does not possess it.

Rest assured, I shall not send my smaller works to any other publisher than yourself. But I am very old and death is drawing nigh. Even the smallest work costs me far greater labor than it would others, since I make it a point to examine all the authors I can get hold of, and, as every reader may see, I say much in a few words, being a lover of something substantial, rather than of empty periods.

Certain friends have informed me that in Venice there is a demand for a work printed here in Naples, entitled: "History of Nola, by F. Remondini, of the Congregation of Somasca." They write that I should let you know about it, and prepare you for the demand that may be made for the work. There are three volumes folio bound. The price, they tell me, is nine ducats; but a reduction could be secured. I mention this to you, solely to oblige my friends. You may avail yourself of the information, if it be of any use to you. Live Jesus, Joseph, and Mary!

I remain

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 57.

To the Same.

He sends him a little treatise to be inserted in the *Moral.* —Importance of this treatise.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, August 1, 1759.

Most Illustrious Sir: I am sending you the little work I have recently composed on prohibited books.[1]

It is to be inserted in the *Moral*, as I wrote to you, at the end of the treatise *de Legibus*. You will find the place marked at the end of the said treatise in the copy of the *Moral* that I forwarded to you some months ago. In accordance with your wish, I sent it to you *via* Rome, through the medium of his Eminence, Cardinal Priuli.

In case the pages following the above-mentioned treatise *de Legibus* should already be printed, this little work on forbidden books may, as I have told you, be placed at the end of the volume.

I would request you not to omit the insertion of this little dissertation, together with the other additions that I sent you with the copy. It is a very elaborate work and, in these days, may contribute greatly to the good of the Church, inasmuch as many books tainted with heresy are everywhere in circulation, and the opinion is current among libertines that forbidden books may be read.

It seems to me, I have already informed you that I received all the copies of the *Preparation for Death*, of the

1 "Dissertatio de justa prohibitione et abolitione librorum nocuæ lectionis."

Practice, and of the other works that you sent me. Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] The little work on forbidden books, I am sending you through Signor Giuseppe Agazzi.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 58.

To the Same.

He asks for an explanation of some remarks which he does not understand, and gives an account of the sale of the books printed at Venice.

NOCERA, October 8, 1759.

Your esteemed letter of the 15th of September lies before me, but your remarks are altogether too succinct. I do not well understand them.

You write that his Eminence, Cardinal Priuli, has been so kind as to send you the package. I hope, then, that you have already received the large *Moral* with its additions.

I beg you, however, to explain to me more clearly in your next letter, whether you have really received it, and also the little treatise on *Forbidden Books*.

You say: *I renew my solicitations with regard to the Latin Practice.* I believe you are here alluding to the sale of this work. But you do not inform me whether you are sending me a package or a letter advising me of its contents. I have, meanwhile, been impatiently waiting for these same Latin *Practices*. At this very moment, I have an opportunity to sell them.

I shall have inquiries made of Signor Aurisicchio to ascertain whether you have already sent the packages containing the *Practices*. In your letter of August you wrote that at the first opportunity, you would despatch to me two hundred copies for sale; but in to-day's letter you do not say a single word about having sent them.

I now send you through Signor Aurisicchio forty-six ducats and one *carlino*, the proceeds of the sale of your books.

As to the large *Moral*, I have only a few copies remaining, and I expect to dispose of them soon. Among them, however, there are some, as the Brother writes to me from Naples, incomplete, several sheets being missing.

Apropos, it seems to me that I wrote to you some time ago, to send me the missing sheets that the defective *Morals* might not remain useless; but I do not clearly remember the details. I shall instruct the Brother to write to you himself from Naples, stating how many pages are wanting and which they are.

Again I repeat that very few of these *Morals* are now left over, at least that is what the Brother has told me. As for myself, I am too much occupied with the affairs of our Congregation. They leave me not a moment of time to think of aught else.

Regarding the *Preparation for Death*, you must have a little patience, for I cannot sell them before I have disposed of my own edition.

I have sold but few copies of the little book of *Visits*, for here in Naples there have been so many editions of it that we are at our wit's end what to do. I tell you once more, with regard to these editions, that I have no part in them. I speak of my own works. The booksellers are the cause. Seeing that my works have good sale, they print them again and again. I cannot help this. I have no copyright on my books, nor can I procure one.

Here in Naples it is not granted in favor of smaller works.

For the rest, I shall not fail to have your edition sold when the retreats are being conducted in our houses.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] I am expecting the Latin *Practices*. Regarding the *Glories of Mary*, I hear they have again issued a new edition at Naples.

You wrote to me that you allow me a reduction of forty per cent. I thank you for this. But you must know that, in order to dispose of your books quickly, I sell them for what I can get; consequently, in some cases, perhaps, I sacrificed something myself, in order to be able to send you the full amount. Indeed, I am far from being a merchant. I have scarcely a chance to dispose of the books at the season of the retreats. Live Jesus and Mary!

One word more. I send you to-day seventeen ducats for ten copies of the *Moral* that have been sold. The small remittance of sixteen ducats forwarded to you lately, was from the sale of those same copies.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 59.

To the Same.

He asks for some copies of the *Homo Apostolicus*, and, speaking of the sale of some smaller works, he advises a reduction in the price.

NOCERA, November 1, 1759.

Most Illustrious Sir: It is a very long time since I have had a letter from you, and I know not whether the *Moral*

and its additions have reached you. Nor do I behold the arrival of the Latin *Practices*, which I and many others with me have been so anxiously expecting.

It is now fully a month since I forwarded to you, through Signor Aurisicchio, a remittance of forty-six ducats, the proceeds of the sale of your books.

I have disposed of eight more copies of the large *Moral*. I expect to collect some money from the sale of other books, and then I shall send the whole amount.

I wish to make a remark to you regarding the little book of *Visits*, and the *Manual for Those about to be Ordained*, namely, that they might, perhaps, have a better sale, if you were to reduce the price. You have rated them at a *lire and a half* apiece, that is, at eighteen *grains*, so that with the binding they cost about twenty-one *grains*. On the other hand, the little book of *Visits*, for which there is a very great demand, is sold here by the booksellers (I speak of the copies they issue from their press), at from twelve to thirteen *grains*. Consider, then, whether it is not advisable for you to reduce your price.

Above all, I beg you to see that the Latin *Practice* come to hand soon. Let me know, also, whether you have received the large *Moral*.

Your copies of the *Moral* are exhausted. Twenty-eight have been sold. I have sent one with the additions, and in another some pages are missing. I think, however, that the Brother at Naples has already written to you which they are, that you may send them on. Live Jesus and Mary!

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 60.

To the Same.

The fourth edition of the *Moral* having been begun, he asks the publisher to have certain passages struck out, and states his reasons. He again speaks of the sale and price of other books, and gives notice that he will soon finish another new work.

Live Jesus, Joseph, and Mary!

NOCERA, November 14, 1759.

Most Illustrious Sir: I rejoiced exceedingly at the news that the *Moral* came to hand, and is now in press. I hope you are still only at the beginning. I pray you, therefore, to look at *page 8* of my work, immediately after the *Prolegomena* of Father Zaccaria (I refer, you see, to *page 8* of the first book). Remark the marginal number *42* which begins: *Quæres inde* [*an liceat occidere invasorem famæ vel honoris*] [1] and ends: *Vide dicenda l. 3, n. 381.* I beg you to eliminate this entire paragraph, and prefix the said marginal number *42* to the small paragraph following, which begins: *Sic pariter.* I also beg you to refer to *l. 3, n. 381, pag. 132,* to the line commencing with the words: *Quæritur igitur* [*an liceat viro honorato occidere invasorem injustum sui honoris in re gravi*] [2] after the text of Busenbaum. This entire paragraph with the two following, as far as *n. 382,* I beg you to strike out; for the question is therein treated, whether it is lawful to kill one who attacks our honor.

The opinion we follow in this passage is the common and most probable one. Nevertheless, as you are aware, a

[1] *The question is asked* [*whether it is lawful to kill the person that attacks our reputation or our honor.*]

[2] *The question is, therefore, asked* [*whether it is lawful for a man of quality to kill the person that unjustly attacks his honor in a grave matter*],

great storm has arisen in Portugal against the Jesuits. The people are saying that the Jesuits made use of this opinion to advise a conspiracy against the king. It is well, therefore, to eliminate this entire passage.[1]

[1] The case here alluded to is very similar to that already mentioned in Letter 36, p. 79. On the night of September 3, 1758, Joseph Emmanuele I., King of Portugal, while returning incognito to his palace from the house of the Marquis Tavora, where he had been engaged in a love intrigue with the young marchioness, was assailed by a party of ruffians with arquebuses lying in ambush. The king was in the carriage of his favorite chamberlain, Texeira, who accompanied him. It was at Texeira, as was afterwards ascertained, and not at the king, of whose presence they were entirely ignorant, that the assassins had directed their attack, wishing to punish him for having outrageously offended the Duke of Aveiro. But, as may easily be understood, the cry of a conspiracy against the life of the sovereign soon went up on all sides. Many seemed to look upon the Tavoras as the instigators of this unsuccessful attempt, who, they alleged, sought in this manner to defend and vindicate the honor of their family sullied by the licentiousness of the king. Pombal, the Prime Minister, an avowed enemy of the marquis and his house, not only strove to encourage and magnify these false rumors, but took occasion of them to ruin at one stroke all his enemies, namely, the first personages of the court, Mascarenhas, the Duke of Aveiro, the Marquis Tavora, his mother Eleanora, and all his family and friends. Without lawful trial he had them all condemned to a most cruel death.

Profiting of the same occasion he now resolved to give the death-blow to the Jesuits whom long before he had sworn to drive out of the kingdom. He did everything in his power to throw upon them the odium of the attack upon the king, alleging among other pretexts that the conspiracy originated in their doctrines regarding regicide, homicide, the defence of a person's honor, etc. It is not our intention to record here either the odious measures taken against the Society of Jesus, or the account of its expulsion from Portugal. (We have seen, vol. i., *General Correspondence*, p. 546, how grieved St. Alphonsus was at this event.) But we must remark that the opinion in Moral Theology, which was used as a pretext for such execrable deeds, is precisely the one of which the saint is speaking to Remondini, and which he wishes to have eliminated from his

I am anxiously awaiting the Latin *Practices*. I shall send word at once to the Brother at Naples to be on the alert for their arrival, so as to procure them as soon as possible, and sell them.

I thank you for the gift of fifty copies.

One thing, however, I do not find indicated, the price. Perhaps, the correspondent forgot it. But enough of this. I shall be guided by the size of the work and by the price of the Italian *Practice*. In regard to your other books, I shall regulate myself according to the prices at which they are sold at Naples.

I must make one remark concerning the other seventeen ducats I sent you (seventeen or eighteen, I do not clearly remember). I forwarded them to you many months ago, and I am surprised that Signor Aurisicchio has given you no account of them.

Please let me know whether you have a copy of *Cornelius à Lapide*, and inform me of the price.

I am almost at the end of the work, entitled: *Selva* [*Collection of Material*] *for Retreats to Priests*. As soon as I have finished it, I shall send it to you through Signor Agazzi.

If the Latin *Practices* had arrived here sooner, I should have had a fine chance to dispose of a large number. As it is, I shall try to do all I can to sell them. Live Jesus and Mary!

Most Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] In case the sheet containing the first-mentioned

work. Though the common and most probable one, this opinion could, in fact, provoke tyrannical conduct on the part of a mischief-making authority, too prone to view on all sides and in everything, conspiracy against temporal sovereigns.

passage be already printed, at least omit printing the second quotation (as given above) of the third book.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 61.

To the Same.

He is consoled at the progress of the printing of the *Moral*, asks for some books, acknowledges the receipt of others, and says that his smaller works are being re-printed without his knowledge, and without his being able to prevent it.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, December 12, 1759.

Most Illustrious Sir: I am consoled at the progress of the printing of the *Moral*. There is a general demand for it here.

It would be a good thing could you send me a number of the Italian *Practices*, of the edition in three volumes. They are much sought after here.

I have received your note informing me of the despatch of five hundred Latin *Instructions* to Signor Ernandez, of Manfredonia, and I thank you for the fifty copies you have presented me. I shall make use of them for my young men.

As soon as I receive the others, I shall make it known. I have received information concerning the price, and I shall be guided accordingly.

Yes, it is true, the Italian *Practice* is being printed here, though not by any order of mine. As soon as it is published, I shall buy a copy and send it to you, for these people do not present me with a single copy; nor do they even give it to me to review, and God knows how many mistakes it will contain. What can I do? I am unable to

prevent it, for here in Naples it is very difficult to obtain a copyright on small works.

It is true that I have made some additions to it, but they are few and trifling. Signor Stasi is printing it. Enough about this. As soon as it appears, you shall receive a copy through Signor Agazzi. Be pleased to inform him of the fact.

Regarding the sale of your books, I shall attend to it as much as I can. I send you on the enclosed sheet a small note or addition to be inserted in the second volume of the large *Moral.* I have marked everything, the page and the number to which it belongs. Live Jesus and Mary!

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,
of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 62.

To the Same.

He signifies to whom he should address himself in future for the sale of the books.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, [January] 17, 1760.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have learned that the Latin *Practices* reached Manfredonia some time ago; however, they have not yet arrived at Naples, owing, perhaps, to the bad weather.

In reference to the selling of your books, I have given it in charge to one of our Fathers who is with me at Nocera, Father Ferrara. It became impossible for me to attend to it, as the government of the Congregation and the direction of the missions occupy all my attention. For that reason, I beg you to conduct all future correspondence on this subject with this Father. Direct your letters to Nocera as hitherto, but with this address: *To Father Don Girolamo*

Ferrara, of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

He intends to write to you soon. He tells me that in the letters you wrote me, he has found a difficulty in regard to the deduction to be made.

Whenever you have anything to write to me, you may enclose it in the letters you send to Father Ferrara.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] After having written this letter, I received one from you.

Yes, Stasi is printing the *Practice*. He is now at the second volume. I have had no part in this matter, have breathed not a single word toward having the work printed. But seeing that he was already printing it, I added a few trifling points. As soon as it is finished, I shall buy a copy and send it to you through Signor Agazzi.

I am now putting the last touches to the *Selva*,[1] which will be published, I hope, within a month. It is a very elaborate work and somewhat bulky, divided into three parts. As soon as it is published, I shall send it to you through Signor Agazzi.

When you have printed it, please be so kind as not to send it either to this place or to Sicily, until I shall have disposed of the edition of two thousand copies printed at my expense. For the rest, be assured I shall forward it to you without delay.

I am sending you two little notes to be added to the second and third volume. But if the page to which they belong is already printed, you need not print a separate

[1] "Selva, or Collection of Material for Sermons and Instructions for Retreats to Priests, and Useful to the Same as Spiritual Reading."

sheet for them, as the matter treated is of no great importance.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 63.

To the Same.

He sends him a copy of the *Selva*, and repeats his remarks concerning the sale of the books. He again begs for the copies of the Latin *Practice*.

Live Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and Teresa!

[End of January, 1760.]

Most Illustrious Sir: My work for priests [*Selva*] has made its appearance in print. I send it to you through Signor Agazzi. I pray you, however, if you should have it printed, not to send it to Naples until you hear from me, for I am only now commencing to sell the copies I had printed.

I have already written to you that, with regard to the sale of the books, you should come to an understanding with Father Don Girolamo Ferrara, of our Congregation. To him I have confided the entire charge of this matter. On account of my affairs, I can do little to further the sale; this Father can attend to it much better.

We are impatiently awaiting the Latin *Instructions*, or *Practices* [*Homo Apostolicus*]. As yet we do not see any sign of them.

I pray you to send them as soon as possible. I counted on the seminaries for a good sale; but I fear that this long

delay has induced them to adopt some other work. Still, send them to me as soon as possible.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original in the possession of Father Gottardo, O. M. Cap., in Rome.

LETTER 64.

To the Same.

He sends two important additions for the *Moral*, and reiterates his pressing demands for the long-desired copies of the *Homo Apostolicus*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, February 6, 1760.

Most Illustrious Sir: I now send you two additions. They are very important, especially the first, inasmuch as it is a Bull recently published by the reigning Pontiff. This has to be inserted at the end of the first volume as a separate *Monitum*, that it may not be necessary to print a special sheet for it.

The second addition is destined for the second volume at the passage marked in the treatise *de Eucharistia*. It is, likewise, of great importance, for it treats of a matter revoked by the same Pope Benedict XIV.

With all my efforts, I have not as yet been able to obtain the Latin *Practice*. From what I hear, the books have not yet arrived at Manfredonia. We are still waiting

for them with impatience. Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 65.

To the Same.

He tells him that he has been informed of the speedy arrival of the Latin *Instructions*, and speaks of the sale of the books and of two other works.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, April 8, 1760.

Most Illustrious Sir: I reply to your esteemed letter. I hear that the *Instructions* have arrived at Manfredonia. I am, therefore, expecting them from day to day. I thank you most sincerely for the fifty copies and the other little works donated to me.

As to the other volumes, I shall give the charge of selling them to our Father Ferrara. He has already on hand, he tells me, some money for books sold. I think he will soon forward it to you through Signor Aurisicchio.

You tell me, moreover, that you have already explained to Father Ferrara the mistake regarding the price, but he says that he has not received your letter. I pray you, therefore, in your answer to this, to add in a postscript what should be communicated to Father Ferrara.

The *Selva* for priests has made its appearance. I have sent it to Rome, to Signor Agazzi that he may forward it to you.

The *Instruction* in the vernacular, which is being printed at Naples, has not yet appeared. As soon as it is published, I shall purchase a copy and send it to you through Signor Agazzi.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,
of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] Please inform me at what stage the *Moral* is at present. Here in Naples it is anxiously looked for.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 66.

To the Same.

To a letter of Father Ferrara, which is here given, the saint adds that he has forwarded the *Selva*, that he has received the Latin *Practices*, and undertaken the printing of a new book which he will eventually send him.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, April 27, 1760.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have just sent eighty-five ducats and eighty-five *grains* of our money to Signor Aurisicchio, with the request that he forward them to you. This amount is the proceeds of the sale of the books. The details are indicated below. I must tell you that it was impossible to dispose of them at the price fixed. I availed myself, therefore, of the liberty you gave our Father Rector Major, and sold the *Practice for Confessors*, some at eight *carlini*, some at seven, binding included, that is, a *carlino* apiece. The ascetical works were with difficulty disposed of for fifteen *grains*, binding included, which, I think, is a *cinquina*, that is to say, two and a half *grains* a volume.

Of the *Manuals* [*for Those about to be Ordained*], I have not been able to sell a single copy, as no one is disposed to purchase the rubrics of Cabrino.

I beg to inform you that I have on hand two incomplete copies of the *Practice* in duodecimo, the second volume being wanting in both; and in one of the ascetical works, some pages are missing.

Besides, I have to tell you that from the sale of these books I have retained nothing, but have transmitted to you the entire amount. I did not receive the letter which you spoke of to our Most Rev. Rector Major, in which, you say, you have explained to me how I should proceed with regard to the deduction. In the meantime, I await more precise information, so that this deduction may be made with regard to the books that remain to be sold.

I have sold

43 Italian *Practices* @ 8 *carlini* (deducting 43 *carlini* for binding), ...	30.10
50 copies of the same @ 7 *carlini* (deducting 50 *carlini* for binding), ...	30.00
190 *Visits to the Blessed Sacrament* (deducting cost of binding), ...	25.75
	85.85

I have sold more copies of your edition of the *Visits* than of the Neapolitan edition. The latter were sold first at thirteen, then at twelve *grains*, and I have had many hundreds of them to give away on missions and retreats. To dispose of them, I exchanged many for Mass intentions.

The *Visits* are all disposed of. Only one hundred and ninety-one were handed over to me (one of which lacked some pages), and I do not know whether any others were sold at Naples. There are some more Italian *Practices* to be bound, but I know not how many.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble servant,

GIROLAMO FERRARA,
of the Most Holy Redeemer.

Live Jesus and Mary!

I, your humble servant, Alfonso de Liguori, add that I have received notice from Signor Giuseppe Agazzi, that he

has already forwarded to you, from Rome, the two small volumes of my last work: *Selva for Retreats to Priests.*

Moreover, I inform you that I have received the one hundred and fifty Latin *Instructions.* I thank you once more for the fifty donated. The remaining one hundred I have commissioned Father Ferrara to have sold.

Contrary to what you wrote to me in your letter, the other two smaller works were not contained in the package.

I have now begun to print the book for nuns.[1] When it is finished, I shall send it to you.

The Italian *Practice*, which is being printed at Naples, has not yet been published. When it appears, I shall send a copy to you, as I promised. Live Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and Teresa!

I remain, Illustrious Sir, as ever,

Your most humble servant,

ALFONSO,
of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original in the possession of Mgr. Andrea Scotton.

LETTER 67.

To the Same.

He complains of the large number of typographical errors in the *Homo Apostolicus*, thanks him for several volumes sent him, and speaks of the large work on *Moral Theology*, as also of the *Instruction and Practice.*

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, May 24, 1760.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received your highly esteemed letter of the 3d of May. If I mistake not, I informed you in my last letter that I had received one

1 "The True Spouse of Jesus Christ, or the Religious Sanctified by the Practice of the Virtues of her State."

hundred and fifty copies of the Latin *Practice*. I find the print good, but the reviser whom you have engaged, has not shown much ability, for the book is full of errors. It is clear that he did not understand the sense of certain passages and, consequently, allowed many typographical blunders to pass uncorrected. It appears to me that I have cautioned you to employ a very careful reviser for the correcting of this work.

I received with great pleasure your gift of several copies of the *Glories of Mary*, and I thank you for your kindness. I hope that by this time, you have received the *Selva for Priests*, for I sent it to you as soon as I finished it. Signor Agazzi wrote to me that he had already received it to forward to you.

With regard to the first edition of my works, it is always necessary for me to revise it myself; for, as I think I have already informed you, I change many things while the work is in press. For this reason the printers here must have patience with me when I change and recast the matter. I am never satisfied with myself.

I, as well as others who desire to have it, am anxiously awaiting the appearance of the large work on *Moral Theology* which, with the additions that have been made to it, ought, it seems to me, to be a very thorough work. I shall soon send you the *Instruction* in the vernacular. I think it is nearly finished and will be issued in a short time. Before sending it, I intend to make a few slight additions, and whatever changes may increase its usefulness.

I have given a copy of your letter to Father Ferrara. He will answer it. With regard to the deduction, Father Ferrara tells me that he, too, is puzzled. But enough, he will write to you.

On account of my position in the Congregation, it was impossible for me to attend to the sale of the books. This Father is better able to do so than myself. He increases

the sale by exchanging your books for Mass stipends; otherwise, few would be sold. This burden I could not take upon myself.

As for the *Instruction* in the vernacular, it is not necessary for me to send you one of your own copies with the additions in manuscript: first, because I have already given away these additions and have no longer a copy of them; and secondly, because the new edition of Stasi and Migliaccio will appear shortly. I say, *of Stasi and Migliaccio*, because Stasi told me, if I mistake not, that on learning that Migliaccio was already engaged in reprinting the *Practice*, he joined him. I shall, therefore, send you a copy of this edition with the additions already made and with other useful matter that I may collect in the meanwhile.

I have the honor to be

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] You told me in your last letter that I should receive with the Latin *Practices* one hundred copies of two smaller works, but they have not yet arrived. I should have been particularly pleased to get that little work, *How to Assist the Dying*. Live Jesus and Mary. Enclosed I send you the letter of Father Ferrara, in order to save postage. Live Jesus and Mary!

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 68.

To the Same.

Various instructions.—He explains why he does not send the original manuscripts.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, June 19, 1760.

Most Illustrious Sir: I reply to your letter of the 3d of May. The Latin *Instructions* have been bound and are now being sold. I am awaiting the arrival of the copies of the *Glories of Mary;* I am very thankful to you for the gift.

Saturday I expect to receive the new edition of the *Moral Theology* in Italian, and I shall immediately set to work to enrich it with numerous additions. They have already been marked, and I shall send them to you through Signor Agazzi in the copy which he will forward to you.

I should like to know how far you are advanced with the reprint of the new edition of the *Moral Theology*. The work that I am writing for nuns is being printed.

I am not, however, sending you the original manuscripts, because, as I wrote to you on another occasion, I change a great many things even while the work is in press. If I did not, I should afterwards feel very much dissatisfied with my works.

Would to God that we were neighbors! I should then send you all the originals, from first to last. However,

for the future, I shall print very little, or nothing at all, for I am old and my head is very weak.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and humble servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 69.

To the Same.

He speaks of the additions he has made to the Italian *Practice*.—Advice with regard to the selection of a good proof-reader.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, July 2, 1760.

Most Illustrious Sir: The edition of the *Practice* by Signori Migliaccio and Stasi has appeared, and for some days passed I have been engaged in adding to it all the little notes that I had previously prepared. They are numerous, and will prove very useful.

At the beginning of the first volume, I have made on a separate sheet a very useful, though somewhat lengthy addition, which is not found in any of my books on Moral Theology. As it is written in very small characters, I beg you to entrust it to a good reviser.

Again, I wish to warn you for your own advantage, not to employ frequently the services of the man that revised the Latin *Practice*, because innumerable mistakes are discovered from day to day. It is clear that such a reviser is not at all fit for the work. Do not tell him what I have

said, because what is done, is done. I am calling your attention to this point for the honor of your establishment.

As soon as I have finished the additions, I shall send you the *Practice* through Signor Agazzi. I have already made inquiries as to when the next boat leaves for Rome. Please inform Signor Agazzi and ask him to forward the work to you as soon as he receives it.

I am expecting the *Glories of Mary*, as you had the kindness to write to me that I should soon receive some copies. I ask you again to inform me how you are progressing with the large work on *Moral*.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and obedient servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 70.

To the Same.

He sends the *Instruction and Practice*, and repeats his instructions.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, July 10, 1760.

Most Illustrious Sir: I am sending you the *Practice* about which I wrote to you a few days ago, together with all the additions that I have prepared.

I call your special attention to the addition to page 19, first volume, where I have already inserted it. Please confide the revision of this addition to a competent person, for, I assure you, it is important and has cost me great labor. I am speaking of the addition written on a separate sheet.

The handwriting is small, and there are marginal notes together with much Latin; hence it will be necessary to have

a very able reviser. The points treated are very delicate and, if an incompetent person revises them, the work will contain many mistakes even in important matters.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original in the possession of Don Luigi Ferrari of Bassano.

LETTER 71.

To the Same.

The saint informs him that he has forwarded the *Instruction and Practice*, thanks him for certain favors, promises to send him the *Spouse of Christ* as soon as it is published, and renews his advice relative to the choice of a reviser.

NOCERA, July 24, 1760.

Most Illustrious Sir: I reply to your letter of July 12. As soon as the *Moral Theology* in Italian was published at Naples, I laid aside everything else to devote myself to it. After several weeks' labor (without speaking of the notes that I had prepared beforehand), I finished the work in a satisfactory manner. I then sent it to Naples to have it forwarded to Signor Agazzi at Rome, instructing the Brother to send it by sea, as I did not wish to incur the risk of losing a work that had cost me so much labor, by reason of numerous additions on new points which I had made to it. I am happy to say that I received a letter the day before yesterday informing me that the book had been forwarded with special care.

The Lord only knows how many complaints I shall have to hear from Signori Migliaccio and Stasi for having sent you their late edition enriched with numerous additions. But they will have to be resigned.

I am pleased to learn that the large *Moral Theology* is approaching completion. Everybody is awaiting it impatiently. Many thanks for your kindness in my regard.

You may be sure that, as soon as I have finished the work destined for nuns, I shall send it to you. It will make two volumes octavo.

Of all my spiritual works, I should call this one the best. It has certainly cost me the most labor, for it is, so to speak, a compendium of all that other authors have written for the sanctification of nuns.

I should certainly have sent you the work in the beginning, in order to have it printed, but, as I have repeatedly said, it is necessary for me to correct with my own hand all that I publish. Even while the work is in press, I correct, strike out, change, and add a number of things. I am not, however, publishing this edition at my own expense. Stasi is doing it at his.

I received, together with your letter, the title-page of the little work: *How to Assist the Dying*. I am expecting the copies of which you wrote to me quite recently. Live Jesus and Mary!

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] Permit me to renew my advice: when you receive from Rome the *Moral Theology* in Italian, entrust the revision of the proofs to a competent person, and particularly the revision of the separate sheet at the beginning of the volume, as it is the most important of all the additions and contains much Latin. It is, therefore, necessary that the reviser be competent, otherwise mistakes will be found in important points, and every mistake will bring discredit on the work. Precisely for that reason, I fear that the Latin *Practice* has no great sale. It is so full of errors that I am ashamed to

read it. One can clearly see that the reviser did not understand the matter. Live Jesus and Mary!

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 72.

To the Same.

Reasons why the additions for the new reprint of the Latin *Practice* (*Homo Apostolicus*) cannot be prepared before the edition in the vernacular is published.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, August 28, 1760.

Most Illustrious Sir: As soon as the Neapolitan edition of the *Practice* was printed, as I wrote to you, I laid aside everything and began to work for you. When I had finished all the additions, which are numerous and for the most part short, I forwarded the work to Signor Agazzi by sea.

I do not know how long it will take to have it delivered, but I hope you will receive it from Rome by the time this letter reaches you. Signor Agazzi wrote to me last week that he had already forwarded it to you.

As for making the same additions to the Latin edition, I shall try to do so, but I must have time. I am at present overwhelmed with work and am obliged, moreover, to go to Naples on business affecting the Congregation. Since you desire me to point out the errors in the Latin edition, I shall begin to mark them in one of the copies; and, when I have inserted all the additions that are found in the Italian edition, I shall send it to you. But to do this, I shall have to wait for the new edition of the Italian *Practice*, as I did not keep a copy of the additions that I made and, perhaps, I should not remember them. If you think fit, therefore, I shall wait until the new edition in Italian appears.

I thank you again for your kindness. I expect to receive shortly the copies of the *Glories of Mary* and the other little works of which you spoke to me.

I am very much pleased to learn that you have almost finished the large work on *Moral Theology*. When it is completed, do not fail to send a large number of copies to Naples immediately, as there is great demand for it. But, as I have already told you, write to Father Ferrara, for he has charge of the sale of the books.

Father Ferrara has had the fever for several days. I do not think that he sold many of your books this summer. The time of the retreats in our houses is the only favorable opportunity for their sale, and these exercises are given only in the winter. Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

I remain

Your very devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 73.

To Signor Giambattista Remondini, in Venice.

He promises to send him for publication the *Homo Apostolicus*, and the *True Spouse of Christ*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NAPLES, October 4, 1760.

Most Illustrious Sir: I am rejoiced to hear that you have received the Italian *Practice* together with the additions accompanying it.

I have suggested to Father Ferrara to correct all the mistakes in the Latin edition. In this corrected copy I shall insert the additions of the Italian edition together with some others I have marked down; and then, as soon as

your edition makes its appearance, I shall send you the Latin one.

It is true, I am continually besieged with demands for the large *Practice*.[1] Please send copies of it, not only to Father Ferrara, but also to the booksellers. Outside of Naples, there is no opportunity for us to sell them, except at retreats; and as for Naples, the booksellers are the proper persons to dispose of them.

I shall recommend to Father Ferrara to further, as much as possible, the sale of your books; but, as I mentioned in a previous letter, we cannot sell them in summer, as it is not the season for retreats.

I assure you, as soon as the work destined for nuns is printed, I shall send you a copy. And, since Stasi wishes to publish the first part, which I have now almost completed (on account of the numerous demands for it here in Naples by religious, he desires to publish the first part without waiting for the second), as soon as it makes its appearance, I shall send it to you through Signor Agazzi. Please notify him of this beforehand.

Do not forget to send me in your next shipment of books those smaller works of which you wrote to me.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

[1] The saint here alludes to the Italian *Practice* of which mention has so often been made. He calls this the large *Practice* to distinguish it from another published by him, entitled: "Practice of the Confessor to aid him in the Exercise of his Ministry," which was translated into Latin under the title: "Praxis confessarii ad bene excipiendas confessiones."

LETTER 74.

To the Same.

He speaks of the sale of the books, of the favor with which the *Instruction and Practice* is received, and of the work for nuns, concluding with a description of the sort of printers there were at that time in Naples.

Live Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and Teresa!

NOCERA, [January] 16, 1761.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received your esteemed letter announcing the despatch of the books, and I thank you most heartily for the munificent present you have had the kindness to make me.

I have written to the Brother at Naples to go to the custom-house on the day the books arrive from Manfredonia, and I have also told Father Ferrara to attend to the sale. He assured me that he would use all possible diligence, but that we must wait till there is a demand for them; for, in truth, we have no other opportunity of selling them here than during the time of the retreats. He says, also, that he has already mentioned this to you in a recent letter.

At present, I am arranging together many important additions for the Latin *Practice;* but I am still waiting for the publication of the *Practice* in the vernacular, which I lately sent you. I shall then add to the Latin addition both sets of notes in one of the printed copies, which I shall afterwards send to you.

Were a hundred thousand copies of this *Practice* printed, they would all be sold.

As soon as the second volume of the work for nuns [*Spouse of Christ*] appears, I shall send it to you. Let me know whether you have received the first, for, if it has been lost, I shall send you another copy.

I am writing letters regularly to Signor Agazzi. But he seldom gives me any information as to the receipt of my books. I am sorry that Signor Stasi printed but a few folios of the second volume and then abandoned the work for lack of funds. Oh, that we were nearer to each other that I might do the correcting! These printers of ours are nothing else than a set of beggars. Just now they have printed my works on common waste paper and are selling them for nothing.

When you write to Father Mansi, remember me most kindly to that learned Father. I am delighted that his *Epitome*,[1] taken from the works of Benedict XIV., accompanies my *Moral*.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] I send you the enclosed sheet, which contains another short, but important note to be added to the latest Italian *Practice*, printed at Naples, of which I sent you a copy. I beg you to insert it promptly in the place indicated.

I beg you not to delay printing the above-mentioned *Practice*, which contains very important additions not found in any edition hitherto published.

I again declare that, if millions of copies of this work be printed, millions of copies will be sold. At this place there

[1] The celebrated Father Giovanni Domenico Mansi, of the Congregation of the Mother of God, created Archbishop of Lucca, in 1764, among other learned works, had written an "Epitome doctrinæ moralis et canonicæ ex operibus Benedicti XIV. depromptæ," (Epitome of Moral and Canonical Teaching taken from the Works of Benedict XIV.), which was inserted as an appendix to the fourth edition of the *Moral Theology* of St. Alphonsus. It is of this work that the saint here speaks with such satisfaction.

is a continual demand for it, and I think it is the same elsewhere.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 75.

To the Same.

He says that, accompanying the second volume of the work for nuns, he is sending two other very useful treatises. He inquires about the printing of the *Instruction and Practice*, tells the publisher of the great demand for it, and explains to him with what restrictions in his favor he has given his consent to the printers at Naples to make use of the copyright.

Live Jesus, Joseph, and Mary!

NOCERA, May 7, 1761.

Most Illustrious Sir: Only last week did I receive your books from Manfredonia, and again I most heartily thank you. I have entrusted the sale of them to Father Ferrara.

Last week, also, the second volume of the *Spouse of Christ* appeared, but I have yet to receive it from the publisher, Signor Stasi. On the receipt of this work I shall transmit it to you without delay through Signor Agazzi at Rome, who, however, has not sent me a word of news concerning the first volume that I sent him. Still I hope he has already forwarded it to you. Let me know whether you have received it, and write again to Signor Agazzi; for it seems to me he is quite listless, and even careless, in despatching the books that I send him.

Accompanying the second volume of the *Spouse of Christ*, I shall send you two other very useful treatises, which I have lately composed.

Tell me whether the *Practice*, or *Instruction* in the ver-

nacular, which I sent you together with some additions, has been reprinted.

At this place there is a constant sale of the work, and I think this is the case, also, in other localities. They have begun to sell the Latin *Practice*, for which I have some short, but useful additions ready. I must first, however, have a copy of the new Italian edition of the *Practice* augmented by the notes of which I have spoken. I can, then, join together both sets of notes.

The booksellers in Naples wished to have my consent to enable them to acquire the copyright, and to have others prohibited from printing my works or from receiving them from abroad. I consented to having my works printed, but as to not admitting those printed abroad, I absolutely refused, and this on account of the editions you publish. This attention will, I trust, be pleasing to you.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 76.

To the Same.

He sends him the second volume of the *True Spouse of Jesus Christ*. He makes inquiries as to the progress of the reprinting of the Italian *Practice*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, May 26, 1761.

Most Illustrious Sir: The second volume of the *Spouse of Christ* has appeared, and I have already sent it to you through Signor Giuseppe Agazzi, your correspondent at

Rome. Write to him immediately and tell him to forward it to you. I mention this, because he rarely writes to me. Let me know whether you received the first volume. In case it has gone astray, I shall send you another copy. Accompanying the second volume, you will receive two other very useful little works which I have recently composed.

Let me know how far advanced you are with the printing of the Italian *Practice*, enriched by the notes I sent you. I wish to make use of the additions in this work for the Latin edition, and to them I shall join many other short notes which I have ready.

As regards the Italian *Instructions* already published, there is a constant sale of them here.

I have received the books you presented to me, and the others which are to be sold, I have given to Father Ferrara. Once more, I return you thanks.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 77.

To the Same.

He again alludes to the despatch of the two volumes of the *Spouse of Christ*, congratulates himself that the printing of the Italian *Practice* is completed, asks the publisher whether he intends to reprint the Latin *Practice*, assuring him that his moral works fall under no prohibition, and, lastly, proposes the printing of a complete edition of his ascetical works.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, June 4, 1761.

Most Illustrious Sir: I write to you once more, although I have already written you two letters, and have sent you, through Signor Agazzi, the second volume of the *Spouse of Christ.*

In the preceding letters, I informed you that I received from Manfredonia all the books of which you had spoken to me. Again, I return thanks.

As for Father Ferrara, I shall let him read your letter, and he will give you an account of the sale. I am very glad that the printing of the *Practice* is finished. I rejoice, too, that you have published it in three volumes, for every one desires to have it in that form.

I wrote to the Brother in Naples to send you, together with the *Spouse of Christ*, two other little works recently composed by me. They are quite small, but very useful.

Yes, you may rest assured, if I ever publish other works, I shall straightway send them to you. But, my dear friend, you must bear in mind that I am an old man and my head is deserting me. I am expecting death from day to day.

I am pleased that you sent me a copy of the new edition of the *Practice*, for I intend to take the notes it contains and add them to the Latin edition, together with some other small additions which I have prepared. I shall then send you the Latin copy with all mistakes corrected.

I have received from Naples a list of the condemned propositions[1] which have caused Signor Stasi to fear that my moral works have been prohibited. But I have already written to him, as I now do to you, that his fear is unfounded. My works are not at all prohibited, if they were, nearly all the books of the Probabilists, among whom I am one of the most rigid, would have to be forbidden.

I add here that many persons have told me that it would be a good thing if all my spiritual works were published together in one complete edition. But I have not the means to incur the expense. Should this project meet your approbation, let me know, and I shall send you all my spiritual works that you have not yet received. All together they would make two volumes in quarto, or, perhaps, even a single volume, though a very bulky one.

I have mentioned this last in passing. However, I know

[1] In the year 1760, the parish priest of Avisio, in the diocese of Trent, published a pamphlet of eleven theses on Probabilism which was condemned on January 3 of the following year, by the bishop of the diocese, and on February 26 by the Tribunal of the Sacred Office. This led some to fear that the teaching of our holy Doctor was included in the same condemnation, but it was not so. Father Vincenzo Patuzzi published somewhat later, under the pseudonym of Adelfo Dositeo, a book, entitled: "The Cause of Probabilism examined by Mgr. de Liguori and again convicted of Falsity." In this work he wished to maintain that the decree, issued by the Holy Office, condemned the following proposition of the saint: *licet sequi opinionem æque probabilem pro libertate, relicta æque probabili pro lege.* But the holy Doctor splendidly refuted this rash assertion in his "Apology in Defence of the Dissertation (published in 1762) on the Moderate Use of Probabilism, against the Attacks of a Very Reverend Professor who styles himself Adelfo Dositeo."

for a fact that very many would like to have such an edition.

From the closing words of your letter I learn that you have not yet received the first volume of the *Spouse of Christ* which I sent you some six or eight months ago. It was, therefore, hardly worth while to send you, as I informed you above, the second volume only. But it matters little. This very evening I shall write to the Brother in Naples to send you once more the first and second volumes, together with my two latest works. Do write to Signor Agazzi to forward them to you as soon as received. Do this, for I fear that gentleman is rather careless in sending you my works.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] Father Ferrara will write to you next week.

I beg you to let me know whether you still hold to your intention of reprinting the Latin *Practice*.* In case you do, I shall begin to insert in the work all the necessary additions, and finish the correction of the errors it contains from beginning to end. If, however, you have given up your intention of reprinting, I shall spare myself that labor, which, I assure you, would be no light one. Please write to me without delay about this matter. Live Jesus and Mary!

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 78.

To the Same.

A repetition of some things contained in the preceding letter.

Live Jesus, Joseph, and Mary!

NOCERA, June 5, 1761.

Most Illustrious Sir: I sent you the second volume of the *Spouse of Christ*, but having learned from your last letter that you had not yet received the first volume (which, very likely, has been lost), I now send you the entire work, together with two others, both my own, which are quite small, though very useful.

Yes, we have received the books sent us in the consignment of last December. Father Ferrara is acquainted with everything. He will write to you later, as he is just now absent from home. I thank you once more for your kindness.

By this time you have certainly received a longer letter which I wrote to you lately. Live Jesus, Joseph, and Mary!

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] I ask you again to inform me whether you still adhere to your intention of reprinting the Latin *Instruction*. If not, I shall spare myself the immense labor required to finish correcting all the mistakes in the work, and to arrange all the necessary additions. Please advise me without delay of your intention in the matter.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 79.

To the Same.

He asks for a copy of the Italian *Practice*, so as to be able to prepare the additions for a new edition of the Latin *Practice*.

Live Jesus and Mary!

NOCERA, June 8, 1761.

Most Illustrious Sir: I reply to your letter of last October, received at this late date, because you sent it directed *to Naples*. I pray you always to direct your letters *to Nocera*.

Father Ferrara is absent from home at present, but I expect him shortly. On his arrival, I shall tell him to write to you.

In my last letter, I asked you to inform me whether you wished me to begin immediately to arrange the Latin *Instruction*. Your letter proves to me that such is your desire. I shall, therefore, set to work at once, to finish the correction of mistakes and the insertion of all the additions I have prepared.

To make this Latin edition a perfect one, I must have a copy of the Italian *Instruction* which, you tell me in your last letter, you have recently published. See that one copy, at least, of this edition be forwarded to me as soon as possible.

According to the usual run, it would arrive too late, I think, if sent *via* Manfredonia. It seems to me you could send it more expeditiously *via* Rome through our friend, Signor Agazzi. You might write to him to give the book to his brother, one of the Pious Workers at Rome, and he could forward it immediately to the Superior of the Pious Workers at Naples for me. This Superior would see that it reached me without delay.

I again inform you that I received all the books sent *via* Manfredonia last December.

As you did not receive the first volume of the *Spouse of Christ* (which was probably lost on the way), I have sent you through Signor Agazzi a copy of the entire work.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 80.

To the Same.

Having spoken of the despatch of some books, of a mistake that occurred in the sending of a letter, and of matters pertaining to the printing of the Latin *Practice*, he tells him of the opinion pronounced by the Sovereign Pontiff, Benedict XIV., concerning his teaching on the subject of Probabilism. He alludes to the publishing of a complete edition of his ascetical works.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, July 13, 1761.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received three letters from you, all at the same time.

Do not say that I pay little attention to your affairs. The first volume of the *Spouse of Christ* had hardly been printed, when I sent it to you; but seeing that after so many months you had not received it, I joined another copy to the second volume and forwarded both to you together with two other newly-composed works, through Signor Agazzi. I sent them to the latter not by the seamen, in whom I cannot any longer place much confidence, but by one of the Pious Workers who was going to Rome. I

hope that by this time you have received them. Let me be informed of what Signor Agazzi writes you. I am writing to him myself to-day, to learn whether he has received the books from the Father above-mentioned; for should it happen that they, too, go astray, I shall send you other copies.

The letter to which you refer was sent to Signor Agazzi, but by some mistake it bore your address. In all probability, then, you will receive the other letter bearing the address of Agazzi. Do not hesitate to open it, as it is the one destined for you.

Father Ferrara has been here, and I think he has written to you. At present, he is absent from home taking the baths at Barile. As soon as he returns, I shall give him your letter.

I thank you for the fifty copies of the Italian *Practice;* I am waiting for the other books of which you spoke.

Every day we sell many copies of the *Practice,* as it is a very cheap work and is recognized as being a most useful one, also; indeed, with little trouble much knowledge can be gained from it.

As regards the Latin *Instruction,* I have been working at it for some months past, not myself alone, but others with me, rectifying the quotations and correcting the many errors it contains. I am, also, inserting the new additions, all very useful, which I had prepared. I am now near the end of my work. In two or three weeks it will probably be completed, and I shall send it to you through Signor Agazzi, not without the fear that it may eventually be lost, as happened to the first volume of the *Spouse of Christ;* however, I have no other way more secure than this.

You will notice in particular at the beginning of the work, a rather lengthy note that cost me much labor.

As to the propositions you mention, you must know that, in many opinions, I am considered and called a

Rigorist by the Probabilists. In truth, I cannot bring myself to approve of their opinions on these points, and I have censured as lax many opinions held by the Jesuits.

For the rest, I cannot induce myself to embrace the extreme Rigorism of certain modern writers who seek to lead souls to despair.

The writer on Moral Theology who holds to the golden mean, must necessarily encounter contradiction. Benedict XIV., however, in the letter of eulogy that he wrote me, declared that my work would give universal satisfaction; and from another quarter, I learned that the Holy Father commended me for being so fair in my opinions.

I thank you for the work *Exposition of Doctrine, etc.*, which you tell me you sent, but I should like to know whether the corrections of Father Patuzzi were made before or after the prohibition of Rome.[1]

Since you propose publishing a complete edition of my

[1] Of this book we read the following in the "Dizionario di opere anonime e pseudonime di Melzi" (Melzi's Dictionary of Anonymous and Pseudonymous Works): "'Exposition of Christian Doctrine,' a work of Francesco Filippo Mezenguy, translated into Italian by Canon Domenico Cantagalli, Rector of the Collegio Bandinelli in Rome, at the instigation of Mons. Battari and Cardinal Passionei, and printed at Naples, in 1759. It was condemned by a Brief of Clement XIII., subscribed by this same Cardinal Passionei, then Secretary for Briefs. Father Patuzzi, a Dominican, corrected it, and changed it in such a manner that it might be regarded as withdrawn from the censures of Rome. These censures had been communicated to Father Patuzzi by a fellow-religious, Father Ricchini. The work as corrected was printed at Venice, in 1761, and in 1788."

Father Patuzzi, whose name often occurs in the correspondence of St. Alphonsus, was born in the year 1700. In 1717, he entered the Order of St. Dominic. His remarkable talent soon showed itself, and he was named Professor of Philosophy, and afterwards of Theology at Venice. An ardent defender of Probabiliorism, he could not fail to have St. Alphonsus for an adversary. The holy Doctor, however, refuted him with as much moderation as clearness. He died at Vicenza, June 26, 1769.

works, those on Moral excepted, write and tell me when you intend to commence it. Once clear on this point, I should set to work to revise all my works, many emendations being necessary.

I mention this, because some time will be needed for a general revision; besides, I am old and in feeble health, and almost every year I am afflicted with a mortal sickness. I daily expect death.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] I have also received the catalogue of printed works. I shall give it to read to all whom I meet. Live Jesus and Mary!

As it has become known that the Latin *Instruction* is to be reprinted, I have already received a number of orders for it. I recommend you henceforth to have the quotations verified by two proof-readers working in concert.

LETTER 81.

To the Same.

He speaks of the despatch of the different books, among others the Latin *Practice* (*Homo Apostolicus*) with the additions destined for it, and makes some special recommendations concerning the work.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, July 20, 1761.

Most Illustrious Sir: As mentioned in a previous letter I had already forwarded the *Spouse of Christ* to you by one of the Pious Workers *via* Naples; but for greater security and to let you see more clearly my attention

to your interests, I now send you another copy of both volumes of the work, together with my two latest productions: *The Mass Hurriedly Said*,[1] and *The Method of Preaching*,[2] little pamphlets which have been very well received at Naples.

I send you, also, two other books, a little larger in size, as you will perceive: the one a treatise on *Prayer*, the other a collection of *Meditations and Reflections*.[3]

The latter work is already embodied in the *Spouse of Christ* toward the end of the second volume; nevertheless as it is a work very useful for everybody, the secular as well as the ecclesiastic, I have had it printed separately, adding thereto some few points.

The treatise on *Prayer* does not differ from the larger work on the same subject, which I sent you some time ago; but this time I have printed the first part only, as the second part is theological, and, consequently, not of general utility. The present little work, however, is useful for every class of people.

I send you, also, the Latin *Instruction* which, as I wrote you some time since, has cost me months of labor, as well on account of the innumerable corrections that had to be made, as on account of the many valuable additions I have inserted. These additions are, for the most part, quite short; but there are a few rather long, since, by reason of the matter treated, I could not cut them down any more.

The longest you will find at the beginning. It cost me more labor than the others, and the corrector will have to take special pains in revising it.

I have had it copied twice; but, for all that, it still con-

[1] "The Mass and the Office that are Hurriedly Said."

[2] "A Letter to a Religious on the Manner of Preaching of the Apostles, with Simplicity and Avoiding a Too Lofty and Florid Style."

[3] "Meditations for a Private Retreat of Eight Days."

tains many erasures and references. When, therefore, the proof-reader revises the printed sheet, he must keep the original manuscript before him, or else many mistakes will creep in.

It will be specially necessary to have the quotations compared by two persons at the same time, the one reading, the other verifying. If this is not done, many quotations will be mutilated, to the disgust of the reader and the injury of the book.

You will notice that the book, from much handling and turning of leaves, has become pretty well battered. As soon as you receive it, please write and inform me of the fact. As regards the work for nuns, if that should be lost, it would matter little, as I would send you a fresh copy. But it is only with extreme repugnance that I should begin anew the labor I have had with this Latin *Instruction*.

I have already given orders to those at Naples to be on the watch for the arrival from Manfredonia of the latest copies of the Italian *Practice*, of which you recently wrote to me.

I have the honor to be.

[*The signature of the saint is wanting.*]

[*P. S.*] I am sending you the books in question by way of Castellamare. I hope they will arrive safe. The main thing is that Signor Agazzi forward them to you from Rome as soon as possible. I beg you to write to him, that he may not forget to send them to you. Live Jesus and Mary!

The corrector should be a person versed in Moral Theology, or else it will be impossible for him to make the corrections properly.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 82.

To the Same.

He sends him two additions to be introduced into the *Homo Apostolicus*, and gives some details as to how this is to be done. He again speaks of sending the work for nuns, and tells him what he will do to make the complete edition of his works a perfect one.

Live Jesus, Joseph, and Mary!

NOCERA, September 5, 1761.

Most Illustrious Sir: From what I learn from Rome, I trust that by this time you have received the Latin *Instruction*, or, at least, that you will shortly receive it.

I fancied it would be an easy task to insert the notes I had prepared; but two months of hard labor have disabused me of that idea. Moreover, having had occasion to read certain teaching, I have found it necessary to change entirely one addition inserted in the work, which is not altogether correct, and substitute this other which I send you—an addition [1] that has cost me three more weeks of continual labor.

This latter addition is much shorter. Its insertion will necessitate the elimination of two notes that are in the first volume, one at page 30, the other at page 96. On the latter page you will find a very long addition, which must now be entirely omitted.

I beg you carefully to preserve the present letter, that it may be attentively studied by the compositor and reviser while the book is printing. They will bear in mind the following remarks:

[1] This addition which, toward the end of the letter, the saint calls the *large addition*, was inserted, and thenceforward reproduced in all the additions of the *Homo Apostolicus*. It is found in *tract. iii. De actibus hum. et pecc.* from the end of n. 24 to n. 40 exclusive.

1. The enclosed addition belongs, as I have observed, to the first volume, at the end of n. 24, page 30.

2. This addition being inserted, the two manuscript notes, one of which is at n. 25, page 30, are to be omitted. Leave out, also, the entire printed text of the same n. 25, resuming the printing from the words that stand at the beginning of n. 26: *Præterea ad hoc, etc.*

Eliminate, likewise, the entire note on page 96 of the same volume. It is marked at the end of n. 8.

Furthermore, at the said n. 8, p. 96, at the top, do not insert what is in the printed copy, but, instead, what I have written in the enclosed note. Then add part of the printed text in the manner indicated in said note which commences with the words: *Questa Postilla.*

3. Take care to change the numbers in the margin beginning with the line: *Præterea ad hoc, etc.* page 30. At that place the paragraph number is 26; but since it must follow the numbers placed in the addition, it should be marked n. 40, and all the numbers following to the very end of tract. iii. page 37, are to be changed accordingly.

Another remark. If you look at the index of chapters of the first volume placed at page ix. tract. iii., you will there find at cap. ii. punct. i. *De peccato, etc.*, that it reads: *De consensu*, 26 to 31. This number must be changed, and 40, etc. placed instead.

Notice, furthermore, that on the sheet which I here enclose, all the quotations are at the foot of the columns. You will, then, insert the quotations on the smaller sheet and omit the three at the bottom of page 30, marked *A*, *B*, *C*, respectively. The other quotations will then follow in order according to the letters in the said paragraph beginning: *Præterea ad hoc*, on page 30, first column.

I send you another little note also referring to the first volume, page 96. It would be well to have these notes

attached to their respective places, so that they may not be lost.

I hope you have received the work for nuns, of which I have sent you two sets, in order that one, at least, might reach you without delay. These I forwarded to you together with some of my smaller works. The day before yesterday I received news from Rome that my package had arrived there.

For pity's sake, do not say any more that I pay little attention to your affairs. Distance is the cause of most of the delays.

Two days ago, I had a letter from Signor Don Matteo Ernandez, announcing to me that the bundle containing the Italian *Practices* had arrived at Manfredonia. I have accordingly written to him to have them forwarded to Naples.

Father Ferrara will himself write to you.

After writing the foregoing, I got your letter, from which I learn that you have received the first volume only of the work for nuns. By this time, I trust, you have the second also, for I sent you two copies of the complete work, one some time ago, the other with the *Homo Apostolicus* and its additions, which I only recently despatched to you through Signor Agazzi.

When you receive the *Homo Apostolicus*, and, likewise, when you get this letter, please inform me immediately, for the long addition, which I now enclose, has cost me about three weeks' labor. For this reason I have had several copies of it made that, in case you do not receive this letter, I shall be able to send you another copy of the addition.

As soon as I became aware of your intention to issue a complete edition of all my works, the *Moral* excepted, I began immediately to revise them, and I have now almost finished two. I shall revise every one of them, little by

little and, when finished, I shall send them all to you. This revision has become necessary, for I notice that many mistakes have slipped into the various editions. In order, therefore, that this edition may be a perfect one, I wish to examine the books, one by one, page by page. I shall notify you of the order in which they are to be printed, so that all confusion may be avoided, and that things already found in one work may not be repeated in another.

I have spoken to Father Ferrara. He will write to you.

Signor Don Matteo Ernandez wrote to me only a few days ago that the new *Practices* have arrived at Manfredonia. I expect them shortly.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 83.

To the Same.

He sends him a printed half-folio for the correction of some mistakes in the edition of the *Instruction and Practice*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, November 8, 1761.

Most Illustrious Sir: For a long time I have been expecting some news from you, as I am especially desirous to know whether, besides the first volume of the work for nuns, you have received the second also. I did, indeed, get a letter informing me that the first volume had come to hand; but whether you got the complete work that I sent you on two different occasions through Signor Agazzi, I have as yet been unable to ascertain.

I earnestly request you to inform me whether you received the Latin *Instruction*, the arrangement of which cost me considerable labor. I have still some copies remaining, should the original, which I sent you, be lost.

I wrote to you that I had received the copies of the last edition of the Italian *Instruction*. It is, without dispute, the finest yet published. Please send some copies to Father Ferrara, for he can easily dispose of them.

Speaking of this latest edition, I have remarked inexactness in one question of the first volume. Certain passages are not arranged in their proper places, and the points that follow are not well connected with the preceding. I have, therefore, had printed here in Naples, for folio *I.* the half-folio which I send enclosed. I have had a number of copies printed, both for the copies you have already sent me and for those you will send in the future.

I send you this half-folio, as I think it would be a very good thing for you also, to have it printed and inserted in the middle of folio *I.* of the first volume, page 247, as you will see it marked.

The expense connected with it is but a trifle. On the other hand, the question treated is a well-known one nowadays, and, in accordance with certain researches I have made, should be as I have now arranged it, and not as it stood hitherto. Remark, moreover, it must be inserted in the middle of the folio, omitting what stands there at present.

Father Ferrara is not at home, but, in all probability, he will write to you soon.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] I am engaged in revising my ascetical works for

the complete edition, as you have advised me. Live Jesus and Mary!

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 84.

To the Same.

He complains that he has received no answer for a long time, and earnestly begs him to write.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA DE' PAGANI, December 13, 1761.

Most Illustrious Sir: For some months I have been awaiting a letter from you and, to my great astonishment, I see none forthcoming. I know not how to account for this silence. Fearful that some misfortune had happened you, I wrote to Signor Aurisicchio for information. He has sent me word that I need not fear, for he is constantly receiving letters from you.

I was especially desirous to learn whether you had received the Latin *Instruction* with my notes (which have cost me no little labor), and the two volumes of the work for nuns. I have, nevertheless, been in anxious suspense all these months, without so much as one line from you. Some time ago, your letter of August, if I mistake not, informed me that you had received the first volume of the work for nuns. Since then I have been unable to get further information.

Recently, that is, about a month ago, I sent you a half-folio which I have had inserted in your edition of the Italian *Practice*. It treats of a very important question, and on that account I have had it inserted in all the copies you lately sent me. I would have sent you another one of those sheets, but as you have not written for so long, I deferred doing so.

I earnestly beseech you to let me know, at least, whether you have received the Latin *Instruction*, and the entire work for nuns, of which I sent you two sets to insure a safe arrival. I shall send this letter to the above-mentioned Signor Aurisicchio that it may reach you safe.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 85.

To the Same.

He asks him to defer the printing of the *Homo Apostolicus;* and annoyed at not receiving any answer to his letters, and suspecting some misunderstanding, he demands the reason of his silence.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, [January] 18, 1762.

Most Illustrious Sir: I would write many things to you, especially concerning the Latin *Instruction* which I sent you for republication; but I refrain from doing so, because I see that, notwithstanding my many letters, you will neither answer nor listen to me. I have not even been able to find out whether you received from Rome the *Instruction* in question, or the work for nuns. I cannot divine the cause of your silence.

I shall say no more at present. If the said *Instruction* has not yet been reprinted, I beg you to delay the work; but, in case the printing has been begun, let me know how far it is advanced, as I have a number of emendations which, after mature consideration, I have thought fit to introduce into the work.

This is a matter that concerns not only my honor, but also your own interest; for this latest edition, so impatiently desired by many, ought to be faultless.

Write, at least, to Father Ferrara or to Signor Aurisicchio why you do not answer my letters, a thing that has caused me much pain. Indeed, I suspect that some falsehood has been written about my conduct toward you. If you would only investigate the matter, I am confident it would be quickly cleared up.

I repeat, you can, at least, write to Father Ferrara, who desires you to send him some more copies of the *Preparation for Death*. Those he has are nearly all sold.

I place myself altogether at your service and declare myself, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the edition published at Modena, February 1876, on the occasion of the Malvezzi-Hercolani nuptials.

LETTER 86.

To the Same.

The saint gives vent to his joy at having, at last, received an answer. He gives some recommendations relative to the printing of the *Homo Apostolicus* and other works, and clearly expresses his mind with regard to the portrait requested.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, [January] 21, 1762.

Most Illustrious Sir: *Gloria Patri!* After so many months waiting I have received through Signor Aurisicchio your letter of the 9th inst., enclosing a copy of another of October 10, which did not reach me till then.

As I stated in my previous letter, your long silence was

a source of great pain to me. I feared you had been led to believe, though without foundation, that I was guilty of ingratitude towards you.

I think I now know the cause of my not receiving your letters. It was probably the work of a certain thief who is going around everywhere asking for alms in my name, and who, with this end in view, takes from the post-office all letters addressed to me.[1] I have thought of giving a small sum of money to the postmaster to have my letters excluded from the list. Continue, however, to employ the usual address: *Nocera via Naples.*

I am rejoiced to learn that you have received the work for nuns (which, I perceive from your letter, you have printed in all possible haste), as also the Latin *Instruction.* I should be sorry, however, had you already begun to print the latter work, as after its departure I determined on making several remarks which will necessitate a few additions.

Whether you have begun or not, I beg you to defer the printing, for next week I shall send you a copy of the additions. They are not many, but their importance is considerable. For one or the other, even should you have finished the printing, it will be necessary to make an appendix, in which you could place also the additions belonging to passages already printed.

You must not be surprised at this constant changing. For well nigh forty years I have been engaged in the study of Moral Theology, and I am always finding something new.

I have no time at present to have these additions copied and sent to you. I shall forward them next week.

If you have not yet begun to print the Latin *Instruction*, I would ask you to have it published in small volumes and

[1] See vol. i., *General Correspondence*, page 564.

in the same type as the last edition of the Italian *Practice*. In this shape, it will best please me and others also. But do as you think fit.

With regard to the complete edition of my ascetical works, I have been working steadily for two months, arranging, correcting, expunging, and inserting many things. I think the whole will make a work most acceptable to all, the subjects treated being as varied as they are useful and appropriate.

For some time past I have been employed chiefly in disposing the works in their proper order, together with their general and particular indexes. They are now all arranged, each in its respective place.

Let me know at what date it will be convenient for you to begin the printing, and I shall not fail to send them to you without delay through Signor Agazzi. Please acquaint him of it beforehand. I should prefer, however, to wait till finer weather sets in, lest the books, together with the manuscripts they contain, be destroyed by the rains.

Do you wish me to send you, also, the *Spouse of Christ* and the *Retreat for Priests?* But you already have these works and there are no important additions to be made to them. By keeping them here, we should save the expense of transportation.

In your letter to me you say: *Will you please favor me with your portrait? Send the sketch of about the size of a folio page.*

Of the portrait, there can be no question. It would dishonor the work, which is an ascetical one, did the people see that its author had his portrait taken during his lifetime. When I am dead, they may do with my body whatever they please. The best thing would be to bury me in some dunghill, as I deserve; but as long as I live I desire that my name be not even mentioned. As to the works them-

selves, I affixed my name to them simply to excite the curiosity of people to read them; otherwise, I should have had them printed anonymously.

But let us come to the other part of the passage, which reads: *Send me the sketch of about the size of a folio page.* I beg of you, not to print the work in large folio. I am certain that of such an edition few copies will be sold. I entreat you to publish it either in small volumes, or at least, in quarto. According to the calculation I have made, and the order in which I have arranged the work, there should be three quarto volumes of average size. Let me add: use good paper and advance the price a little. Every one is willing to pay two or three *carlini* more to have the work printed, like the Italian *Practice*, on good paper.

Once more, I beg of you not to think of printing it in folio, a size most unhandy for the reader. Some were quite angry with me for having the *Moral Theology* printed in folio rather than in quarto. I can only answer that the fault was not mine. When, however, there is question of ascetical works, which people read so frequently, they must necessarily be published either in small volumes or in quarto.

I remain, Illustrious Sir.

[*The signature of the saint is wanting.*]

[*P. S.*] At the end of the third volume I have placed the Lives of two of our companions,[1] who died in the odor of sanctity. They are quite short, making little more than a folio. They treat of heroic virtue, not of things that are mere gossip. I send them to you herewith.

I should now like to make an inquiry. I have just finished a *Life*, likewise of small compass, of another

[1] The Ven. Father Gennaro Sarnelli, and the lay-brother Vito Curzio.

Father,[1] recently deceased. It is a much finer one than the two others, and will fill only two folios. I am a man of few words, and I write only facts that can be substantiated. I wish to learn whether you would have me send it to you. If you do not wish it, I shall have it printed here in Naples, and not go to the trouble of having it copied.

You say, also, in your letter: *I shall insert the long note which I found on the sheet you sent me, September 5.*

You refer, I presume, to the Latin sheet; but I sent you another one besides, which I had printed for insertion in the Italian *Practice*. I have had it inserted in all the copies I have here. I should like to know whether you have received this latter sheet, and it would afford me much pleasure if you would have it printed and inserted in all the copies of the last edition of the *Practice* that you have on hand, as the subject treated in it is, like that of the Latin note, a very important one.

I am working with all possible haste to be able to send you the additions for the Latin *Instruction* at the beginning of next week, as I promised.

I remain, etc.

[*The signature of the saint is again wanting.*]

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

[1] Father Paolo Cafaro.

LETTER 87.

To the Same.

He sends the publisher the additions destined for the *Homo Apostolicus*, telling him how to insert them. He also mentions when he will send his ascetical writings.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, [January] 26, 1762.

Most Illustrious Sir: Last week I wrote that I would send you during the present week, some very important additions for the *Homo Apostolicus*.

If, perchance, the work is already printed, I beg you to have the pages which I now send you, inserted at the end of the book. Indicate the passages herein marked, also the places to which they belong. It might be done in this wise:

ADDENDA.

For example:—*Addendum in tomo i. tract. ii. num. 58, p. 22.* "Possunt etiam Episcopi."

All the notes beginning with the opening of a paragraph might be indicated in this manner.

Some, however, begin in the middle of paragraphs already printed. With these you may proceed thus: Place at the beginning of the paragraph what is already printed and is to remain in the number in question; then add the note belonging to the paragraph. The reviser will know how to arrange it.

I would especially urge on you not to forget to insert the notes on the small slips, as they contain matters of great importance.

I repeat here what I wrote in my last letter, you

must not be surprised that, after having spent so much time in arranging the Latin *Instruction*, I have forgotten to insert in it the notes I now send. Moral Theology is an abyss whose depth we may never sound. I am constantly reading, and finding out something new. I pass over many things, but am accustomed to note those of great importance.

I should have sent you these additions long since, but receiving no letters from you for so many months, I refrained from doing so, not knowing what had happened. Encouraged by your letter of last week, in which you signified your intention of printing the *Homo Apostolicus*, I now send them. My purpose in doing so, is, to have the new edition as complete as possible.

In another letter, the receipt of which, as well as of the present, I beseech you to inform me of, I wrote to you more at length, and I now repeat that I have all the ascetical works collected and arranged, with their indexes, in the order in which they are to be printed. I have been occupied for many months with this arranging, correcting, supplementing, and expunging.

Let me know when you desire me to forward them to you through Signor Agazzi, whom I beg you to advise beforehand of these books I have to send him.

For my part, I should prefer to wait for better weather, that the books might not run the risk of an accident on the way. Such an event would grieve me very much, because of the labor they cost me.

I again ask you, to publish, at all hazards, this collection of my ascetical works in quarto, and not in folio. If it appears in folio, I can assure you, you will sell very few copies.

Send us some more copies of the *Preparation for Death*, as those you sent are nearly all exhausted.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 88.

To the Same.

He refers again to the additions sent to the publisher, also to the *Homo Apostolicus*, insisting on the appointment of a pains-taking compositor, and a good reviser.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, February 19, 1762.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received your favor of the 4th instant. This is the second from you during the many months I have been deprived of your correspondence, having received only one letter through Aurisicchio.

I am highly delighted that the Latin *Instruction* has not yet been sent to press; otherwise, it would have been necessary, either to insert little slips or to place at the end of the work the additions I am now sending you. They are all very important, being corrections made requisite by information acquired later.

I trust that, by this time, you have received the letter in which I forwarded to you several additions. In them, as also in those I am sending to-day, I have endeavored to designate clearly the places to which these notes belong, also the manner of their insertion, since in some places a small portion of the printed matter is to be omitted. It has

been my endeavor to point out everything as distinctly as possible.

It will, however, be necessary to employ for the work a skilful compositor, one who does not confound things, and an attentive reviser, who can examine whether any errors have been committed. If the person chosen should be the same, which God forbid, that did the proof-reading of the Latin *Instruction*, there will certainly be another deluge of errors. But I trust, as you have assured me, it will not be the same person.

Please let me know whether you have received all the notes that I forwarded to you in three letters and at three different times; meanwhile I beg you to defer the printing, that the work may be made a thorough one.

Send your letters to me directly to Nocera, that is: *Nocera via Naples*, because, when they come through Signor Aurisicchio, they are always rather late. Be convinced of the fact that I have a high esteem of you, and that I manifest great zeal for your interests.

I now repeat what I have already written to you, namely, that I have finished the revision of all the works that are to constitute the new uniform edition of my ascetical writings. It has been the labor of two or three months, as I have amended many things, added new material, and done a considerable amount of expunging.

It would be well to have all the sheets that I previously sent you, as well as the present ones, inserted in the places indicated that they may not be lost.

Once more, I beseech you to let me know whether you have received the three letters to which I referred above, together with the notes they contained; for if you have not, I could send the notes to you again, as, on account of their great importance, I took care to have them copied.

Anxiously awaiting your reply to all these matters, I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 89.

To the Same.

He sends him two more notes for the above-mentioned work, and expresses his joy that the printing has been deferred. He tells him, also, how to regulate the edition of the ascetical works, and asks about the reception which his work *The True Spouse of Jesus Christ* met with from certain Cardinals.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, February 24, 1762.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have been consoled at receiving a third letter from you through Signor Aurisicchio. In my last, I told you that you might commence to write to me directly *to Nocera;* but now I say, it is better that you continue to send your letters through the said Signor Aurisicchio, as I perceive they reach me more securely by that route.

I am greatly rejoiced that the printing of the Latin *Instruction* has been postponed. *Deo gratias!* It would be to me a cause of great chagrin, had it been already printed, as the additional notes I sent you in my three letters, are of the utmost importance, so much so that, if the work had been printed, they would have to be added at the end.

This new edition of the *Instruction* will, I trust, be an exquisite production, and I expect to see it adopted in many seminaries.

I send you herewith two new notes. Have them preserved with the others. It would be best to insert them at once in their respective places, attaching them with a piece of wafer. At any rate see that they are carefully preserved.

Again I request you not to begin the printing before you have informed me whether you received all the notes I sent you in my letters. If you have not, I shall at once forward others. I have copies of them all, and I desire to make this edition a perfect one. Let me know, therefore, how many of my letters, containing these notes, you have received.

With regard to the complete edition of my ascetical works, I must tell you that I have determined not to send you the work for nuns or the *Exercises for Priests*.

You must be careful to place at the end of each work the indexes of the chapters, thereby to be able to insert in the index of each single treatise, the number of the page of each chapter. In this way you can edit the whole collection in successive parts. On the other hand, if the tables of contents are placed at the beginning, as they now stand, you will not be able to insert the number of the page at which each chapter begins.

I shall not send you at present all the works I have collectively arranged, but shall wait for better weather when the rains have ceased. I am, moreover, just now finishing another little book, entitled *The Truths of Faith*,[1] which I shall send you in manuscript. It will not be large, but I think it will be a useful and valuable work.

I shall also send you the three small *Lives* of our companions, to which I am just now putting the finishing touches. To be brief, I am not losing any time. As soon

1 "Evidences of Faith, or, The Truths of Faith Made Evident from the Motives of Credibility."

as they are completed, I shall send them to you through Signor Agazzi.

I read, toward the end of your letter, that you have received everything I sent you, but particularize, I beg of you. Relieve my anxiety, and tell me, how many of my letters, containing Latin notes, you have received.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

[*P. S.*] For my consolation, please inform me whether their Eminences, the Cardinals, who so eagerly desired my work destined for nuns, have seen it and are pleased with it, and whether they are trying to have it adopted in the monasteries.

One word more. With regard to the complete edition of my ascetical writings, I think that, before I finish the little treatise on *Faith* and the three small *Lives*, of which I spoke above, and which are all destined for the third volume, I could send you the works which make up the first and second volumes, so that you might begin the printing at once, should you be so inclined. However, if you do not intend to send them to press immediately, I shall wait until I can send them all together. That will be when I have completed the above-mentioned little works which terminate the collection. Let me know your wishes in the matter, and I shall conform to them.

I send you, also, the following note of Father Ferrara, whom I have instructed to attend to the sale of the work for nuns.

Father Don Girolamo Ferrara presents his compliments to Signor Don Giambattista, and informs him that he awaits his commands, and asks him to send, if possible, one hundred copies of the *Moral Theology* in folio, and to have

them deposited at Manfredonia, to be brought to Foggia and thence to one of our houses situated in the neighborhood. They will then be sold in all the hamlets of Puglia, as it will be easier to dispose of them there than in the vicinity of Naples, where there is every facility for procuring them. However, if it be impossible to have them deposited at Manfredonia, he need not put himself to the trouble of sending them to us, as we have enough copies here.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 90.

To the Same.

He tells him of his nomination to the episcopate.—Advice relative to their correspondence.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, March 26, 1762.

Most Illustrious Sir: I write to inform you that the Holy Father has nominated me to the episcopal See of Sant' Agata de' Goti in this kingdom. I declined the honor, telling His Holiness that I could not accept on account of my advanced age and ill health; but His Holiness has sent me a formal command to accept, an event that has astounded Naples and Rome.

I desired to inform you of this, and, at the same time, to ask you whenever you have anything to write to me, to send your letters to Rome during the months of April and May, but only till the middle of the latter month, not longer,[1] as after that, you may write to me to Naples, and not to Nocera.

[1] He was compelled to remain at Rome till the 21st of June, to await the return of the Sovereign Pontiff from Civita Vecchia.

Let me know whether you have received my three letters with the notes enclosed.

After penning the foregoing, I received your esteemed letter of the 13th instant, in which you tell me to send you the works destined for the complete edition of my ascetical writings which I have already corrected. When I shall be at Rome, that is to say, in about twenty days, I shall send you the first and second volumes; the third I shall send later from Naples, as I have still some things to copy.

With regard to the Latin *Instruction*, I was pleased with everything you settled; but you do not tell me whether you received my three letters with the notes that accompanied them.

If you have already received the three sets of notes, you may begin to print the work, as there is nothing more to be added. If, however, you have not received all three sets, let me know, and tell me, also, the dates of the letters you have received, if you kept a note of them.

No more, at present.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant.

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,
Bishop-elect of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 91.

To the Same.

He recommends him to hasten the printing of the *Homo Apostolicus*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NAPLES, April 10, 1762.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have already written to you that, by the command of the Pope, I have been obliged to accept the episcopate, and that, in a short time, I shall have to set out for Rome. Wherefore, if you have anything to write to me, direct your letters to Rome, and not to Naples or Nocera; if, however, you desire to communicate with Father Ferrara, send your letters to Nocera.

What I now ask of you is that you endeavor to have the printing of the Latin *Instruction* done as speedily as possible; for, as soon as I arrive in my diocese, I shall have it circulated among all my priests and seminarists.

You told me in your last letter that you received the notes. You may, therefore, begin the printing at once.

Again, I beseech you to select good revisers, who understand well what they review, for the compositors cannot understand the text.

Above all, I beg of you to use good paper, and advance the price. When the paper is good, every one is satisfied to pay a little extra. It will be my endeavor to have the book bought by the seminarists and priests of other dioceses also.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and grateful servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,

Bishop-elect of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] I shall expect all replies from you in Rome.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 92.

To the Same.

He sends him the first two volumes of the ascetical works, adding some remarks concerning the indexes.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ROME, April 27, 1762.

Most Illustrious Sir: I am now in Rome on business connected with the bishopric of Sant' Agata, which I have had to accept by the command of the Pope, as I wrote to you in previous letters.

From Rome, then, I am sending you the first two volumes of the complete edition of my ascetical works, together with a general index of the entire collection, and a special one of the works contained in the first volume. These two indexes are to be placed at the beginning of the first volume, immediately after the title-page.

I send you, also, the index of the works contained in the second volume. It should be inserted at the beginning of the same.

Observe that the indexes of the chapters of the several works should be placed at the end of their respective treatises, as you will perceive I have placed them at the end of the books I am now sending you. You will do the same, also, for the *Exercises for Priests* and the *Spouse of Christ*. I do not send you these latter books, as you have them already.

These indexes are to be placed at the end of every work, in order that you may be able to indicate the pages preceding.

In a short time I shall send you the works that are to constitute the third volume, as I have still some things to finish. Meanwhile, you may commence to print the first

and second volumes, and send me some information concerning them.

Again, I beg you to print as quickly as possible the Latin *Instruction*, as I asked you in a previous letter; for I desire to have it circulated among the priests of my diocese as well as among other ecclesiastics. I recommend you to use good paper and to advance the price a little.

Direct your letters to Rome where I shall probably reside during the whole month of June.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and obedient servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,
Bishop-elect of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the library of Bassano (Venice).

LETTER 93.

To the Same.

He thanks the publisher for his congratulations, and repeats the recommendations and advice contained in the preceding.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ROME, May 22, 1762.

Most Illustrious Sir: I heartily thank you for your kind congratulations, but I must confess, the only consolation I have found in this whole transaction, has been the command of the Pope that obliged me to accept the burden.

I feel quite consoled, also, in thinking that, perhaps, by this time, you have commenced the printing of the Latin *Instruction*. I wish to have it very soon so as to be able to place it in the hands of the clergy, not only of my own diocese, but of others also. For this reason it was, that I endeavored to have you print it correctly and on good paper.

I trust that by the time this letter reaches you, you will have received my ascetical writings arranged for the complete edition. It is now some weeks since I sent them to you from here through Signor Giuseppe Agazzi. I sent only the works that are to make up the first and second volumes, together with their respective indexes. I shall send you from Naples the works destined for the third volume, as I have still to copy some manuscript notes which have to be added.

When you will have begun to print the Latin *Instruction*, inform me of it, I pray you, so that I may know what to do. Write me also a line as soon as you have received the works destined for the complete edition of my spiritual writings.

In all probability, I shall remain in Rome the whole of June, but not longer.

I shall write to Father Ferrara about the sale of the books; but you may be assured that Father Ferrara has no need of being spurred on. He is doing all in his power to sell your books whenever a favorable occasion offers itself.

Tendering you my most humble regards,

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO,

Bishop-elect of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 94.

To the Same.

He informs him of his arrival in his diocese, and asks information on various matters.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA DE' GOTI, July 30, 1762.

Most Illustrious Sir: Here I am in my diocese of Sant' Agata, and I have not had any letters from you since the last received at Rome.

I should like to know whether you have received the books that I sent you for the first and second volumes of the complete edition of my ascetical writings. The third part is almost ready. I shall forward it when I have finished another little treatise which is to complete this volume.

Have you finished the printing of the Latin *Instruction?* I could begin to circulate it among the seminarists of my diocese.

For the future in writing to me, direct your letters *to Naples.* I shall see that they reach me from that place.

When writing to Father Ferrara, direct your letters: *Nocera via Naples*, as I am no longer associated with him.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 95.

To the Same.

Rejoiced at hearing from him, he urges the printing of the ascetical works, also the *Homo Apostolicus*, and instructs him how to send letters for the future.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA DE' GOTI, September 6, 1762.

Most Illustrious Sir: At last, after so many months of waiting, I have had the happiness of getting a letter from you, without date however, in which you inform me that you have already received the first and second parts of the complete collection of my ascetical writings.

I am just now putting the last touches to a little treatise destined for the third volume, and for this, I am stealing every moment I can find. The affairs of my diocese leave me scarcely time to breathe. However, with the first and second parts, which you have already received, you will have sufficient matter to begin the printing of the edition.

I should be very much pleased to learn that its printing has been commenced, that I might hasten to tell the news to those that are eager to possess this collection of my ascetical writings.

I was under the impression that by this time the Latin *Instruction* would have made its appearance. But from your letter I perceive it is still in press. I beg you to finish it without delay, as I ardently desire to place it in the hands of my clergy. I hope to have it received by the clergy of other dioceses, also, especially, by the seminarists.

Father Ferrara has been here on a casual visit, and has read the note intended for him. Continue, however, to direct your letters to him to *Nocera de' Pagani* where he resides. In writing to me do not use this address: *Sant'*

Agata via Naples, but simply *Naples*. In this way I shall receive your letters much more quickly, as I have charged a certain person to see all letters despatched to me without the least delay from Naples.

I await with anxious expectation the news that the *Instruction* has appeared, also that you have begun the printing of the complete edition. Be assured, I shall very soon send you the third part.

I am, Illustrious Sir,

[*The signature of the saint is wanting.*]

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 96.

To the Same.

He renews his request for the printing of the two works in hand, and wishes certain words added to the title-page of the *Homo Apostolicus*.

Live Jesus and Mary!

SANT' AGATA, October 5, 1762.

Most Illustrious Sir: Once again I repeat my request that you let me know how far the printing of the Latin *Instruction* is advanced. I am anxiously waiting for this work, to have it placed in the hands of my diocesans.

I had hopes of seeing it printed before this, but so far I have not learned that it has been. To all who ask me for it, I say: *It will appear soon.* But this *soon* is lasting a pretty long time, and its end has not come yet. At least, let me have some information on the subject.

I am now engaged on the third part of the ascetical works, though I know not whether the first part has been sent to press. Demands for the work come to me from

many. I tell them: *At this moment it is certainly in press*, though I am not so sure whether it is or not.

I remain

Your most devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] If you have not yet printed the title-page of the Latin *Intruction*, add at the end of the present title these few words: *Ad usum Seminarii Sanctagathensis.*

With regard to the name, arrange it thus: *Auctore D. Alphonso de Ligorio, Episcopo S. Agathæ Gothorum et Rectore Majore Congregationis SS. Redemptoris.*

When you write to me, direct your letters: *Naples*, without adding *Sant' Agata*. Live Jesus and Mary!

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 97.

To the Same.

The same subject.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA DE' GOTI, October 15, 1762.

I am in receipt of your longed-for letter of the 2d inst. Notwithstanding that I am well-nigh overwhelmed with the business of my diocese, I do not neglect the little treatise [*Evidences*] *of Faith*, which is, indeed, a very elaborate work. This treatise is needed to complete the third volume of the collection.

The other works destined for the third volume are already collected and arranged, the labor having been finished before my elevation to the episcopate. I beg you to let me hear shortly that the first and second volumes,

which you received, have gone to press. Rely upon it, the third is coming quickly.

With regard to the Latin *Instruction*, I had hoped that, by this time, I should be enabled to circulate it among my clergy; but I perceive you had other necessary work on hand. I entreat you to hasten it as quickly as possible.

I shall again recommend to Father Ferrara the sale of your books, and he will send you an answer.

When writing to me, it would be better for the present to direct your letters to Naples, and not to Nocera de' Pagani; for just now it would take a much longer time to have them reach me *via* Nocera.

As to other small works, which you desire me to send you, I have none to send.

I have placed at the end of the *Retreat for Priests* two short treatises on the subject of the government of dioceses. One is entitled, *Counsels for Bishops;* [1] the other, *Rule for the Use of Seminaries.* As soon as the Latin *Instruction* is finished, have the kindness to inform me of it; also when you begin to print the complete edition.

I shall hardly compose any other works, as the cares of my diocese leave me scarcely time to breathe.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata de' Goti.

[*P. S.*] When you begin the printing of the complete edition, I entreat you once more, for the love of God, not to publish it in large folio, for in that form it will not prove acceptable and will never meet with success. Being a work of spirituality, it should be printed at least in quarto, so as

1 "Considerations Useful to Bishops for the Good Government of their Dioceses."

to be convenient for the reader. Folio volumes, on the contrary, are very unhandy.

People have complained of my having the *Moral Theology* printed in folio rather than in quarto. I answered them that this had been done independently of me. I should, however, regard it as a much greater mistake to have this edition of my spiritual works published in folio.

[*Postscript of Father Don Girolamo Ferrara.*] Happening to be here with Monsignor, our Father, I take this opportunity to inform you that on passing through Naples, I deposited with our Brother there one hundred ducats to be sent to Signor Aurisicchio, who will transmit them to you.

Your very humble servant,

GIROLAMO FERRARA,
of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 98.

To the Same.

After thanking him for some books sent, he refuses to accept any copy of the publisher's edition of the *Homo Apostolicus*, the latter having made the first edition of the work worse, instead of giving out a second one more correct and better arranged. He speaks of the style in which he wishes him to print the edition of spiritual writings and the *Moral Theology*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, Diocese of Sant' Agata, November 18, 1762.

Most Illustrious Sir: I thank you for the copies of the *Meditations*, etc., you sent me.

With regard to the Latin *Instruction*, I was well pleased with the title-page. It is truly well done. I felt deep

chagrin, however, on learning that the work has not been reprinted, but that to five hundred copies of the old edition my notes were simply appended, as your letter informs me, and that such pages only were reprinted as were absolutely necessary.

I can easily understand how the last notes I sent you could have been inserted in this manner; but not how so many notes, large and small, that I made and attached to their respective places throughout the book, could be crowded in at the end. You must have omitted them altogether, or, if you have really inserted them at the end, they will cause great confusion.

Nor can I understand how only the necessary pages could have been reprinted, since it was necessary to reprint all the pages, every single page of the old edition being so filled with mistakes that it disgusts and sickens any one that reads it.

If you choose to send the *Instruction* patched up in this style to Father Ferrara, you may do so; but as far as I am concerned, you need not send me any copies. I could not bring myself to place in the hands of my clergy and seminarians a book so full of errors that I myself am ashamed to read it.

I am very glad that only a few copies of this first edition of the *Instruction* were printed. Such a work would bring me into disgrace everywhere, or, at least, cause me to be considered a very careless man to allow so incorrect a work to be published. It is now still more confused by the insertion of new notes, not one of which is in its proper place.

The more anxiously I have been expecting this Latin *Instruction* for the good of my own and other dioceses, the keener is the affliction it has caused me. I have been desiring the work from month to month, and now, I see, it is hardly begun.

As to the collection of ascetical works, I have already

finished the third volume. Just now I am having printed the treatise, *The Truths of Faith*, which belongs at the end of the third part, which I am soon to send you.

You must not be surprised that I have had this work printed here, when I could have spared myself the extra expense by having you publish it at Venice. I think I have mentioned this to you on a former occasion. I must myself make the first correction of the proof-sheets of all the works I give to the press. In this correction, I alter many things. Sometimes I expunge entire passages, and again I add new matter; for things in print look different from the same in manuscript.

As soon as this work is finished, I shall send it to you together with all the other treatises that are to constitute the third volume.

Again, I beseech you, to give up the idea of printing the edition of ascetical works in folio. I declare to you (and you may be assured of the fact), if this edition is published in folio, very few will buy it. Such a size is altogether inconvenient for the reader. Spiritual works, especially, ought to be handy for reading.

If the work is not printed either in quarto or duodecimo, it will have a poor sale. Many have told me the same thing. Indeed, all spiritual writings, even those embracing many volumes, are printed in smaller forms, for example, the works of Granata, Segneri, Zucconi, Nieremberg, Pinamonti, St. Francis de Sales, and a host of others.

You have been very urgent with your requests for my portrait [1] for this edition, and yet you have not begun the printing. My portrait will be of little service, but this work

[1] With regard to this portrait of the holy Doctor, it may be of interest to relate the statement made by the priest, Don Salvatore Tramontano, in his juridical depositions during the process of beatification. He says: "As I already well knew the holiness of life of the servant of God, I was desirous of having near me a true

will do much good and is asked for by many. But enough! I shall send you the third volume through Signor Agazzi. I fear, however, that this work may meet with the same misfortune as the Latin *Instruction*.

picture of him, to remind me of him continually, and to incite me to invoke his mediation with Almighty God. Some Canons of the Cathedral [of S. Agata] and other priests and seculars, full of the same idea, consulted together with me as to how we might carry out our design, as the portrait would have to be taken without the knowledge of the servant of God. An occasion soon offered. The celebrated painter, Bernardo Caraviello, happened to be doing some painting in the collegiate church and other places in Arienzo. Seven of us went to him and inquired whether he would undertake to paint for us a true picture of the servant of God without the latter's being aware of it. He promised to do so. He discovered a means of carrying out his purpose and, in fact, succeeded in painting the portrait. To satisfy the desires of others, many copies were made. This happened while the servant of God was still at the head of his diocese [in the year 1771]. As years rolled by and his appearance changed considerably, the portrait made by Caraviello no longer represented him faithfully. Prompted once more by the same desire to possess a picture of him true to life at his advanced age, I sent different painters from Naples to obtain the accomplishment of my wish, but not one succeeded. Lastly, I called in a renowned portrait-painter, Tommaso Crosta, who with great tact and skill succeeded in painting a life-like picture without the servant of God having the least knowledge of it. He made two copies of the picture, which I still preserve. Of one of these I had a copper engraving made, from which many copies were taken. Remondini, the Venetian publisher, desirous of having one of these engravings, from which to take copies to place at the beginning of the works of the servant of God, which he was republishing, asked me for it. I sent it to him, and he used it as intended, inserting copies of it in the works of the servant of God [*Moral Theology*, 9th edition]. Thus was fulfilled the desire of Remondini, to whom the servant of God would never consent to send his portrait, notwithstanding his most urgent entreaties."

This we read in the *Ordinary Process of Nocera*, vol. iii. page 1476.

Speaking further on of the high veneration in which the relics and pictures of the saint were held, the same witness continues, as

I beg you, if you do not intend to publish it, to tell me so candidly. There will not be wanting others who will do it, and it is my ardent desire to see this collection published before my death, to which I am drawing nigh. Should it be necessary, I shall have it printed at my own expense.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 99.

To the Same.

The same subject.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, November 27, 1762.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have sent your letter to Father Ferrara, who was sojourning with me for a time, but who has now returned to the Congregation.

I received another letter from you telling me that you had on hand five hundred copies of the first edition of the Latin *Instruction*, and that you had added to them all my notes by way of appendix.

In my last letter, I wrote that, if many copies of this edition were circulated, it would be sufficient to disgrace me everywhere, for it is so full of mistakes that I myself am ashamed to read it. I say again, therefore, that I do not

follows (page 1495): "The demand for little paper pictures of the servant of God was so great that, having had more copper engravings made at my own cost, I had about 18,000 copies taken, some of which I distributed *gratis*, and others to persons who gave me a commission. But a far greater number was taken by the Neapolitan publishers from the plates they had made by engravers, who copied the features of the servant of God from the engravings I possessed."

understand what value my notes, placed at the end and not where they belong, can give the book, since the errors that were committed, are allowed still to remain. And now this last letter of yours brings me still more afflicting news: it is that you will not begin the new edition until these five hundred copies are sold.

I must, then, preserve my soul in peace, for it seems to me that it will prove a difficult thing to find a market for these books. It will hardly happen that, in my life-time, I shall see printed the Latin *Instruction*, which I so ardently desired to give to my clergy. I shall have to apply the best remedy I can, by giving them some other work for a text-book.

With regard to the collection of ascetical writings, I wrote to you that I had finished the treatise on the *Evidences of Faith*,[1] and that I am hurrying forward the printing so as to be able to send it to you together with all the other works belonging to the third volume. But, as I mentioned to you some time ago, I expected that you would have already begun the printing of the first and second volumes, which you had received, and for the printing of which much time will be required.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and humble servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] One thing consoled me in your letter, namely, that you will publish the edition of the ascetical works in quarto, and not in folio.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

[1] Evidences of Faith, or, The Truths of Faith made evident from the Motives of Credibility.

LETTER 100.

To the Same.

He consoles himself that, at last, the printing of the *Homo Apostolicus* has been begun, as also that of the complete edition of his spiritual works, for which edition he promises to send, as soon as possible, the parts of the third volume, and amongst them the *Life of Father Cafaro*, the worth of which he indicates to the publisher. He announces also that he will send him a very useful treatise recently composed. He refuses to listen to the proposition concerning his portrait.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, December 27, 1762.

Most Illustrious Sir: Your last letter has afforded me much consolation, as from it I learn that you have given the necessary orders for the printing of the Latin *Instruction*. I trust that, thanks to your care, this edition will be free from errors, and that all the additions will be inserted at their proper places. May this work prove a source of usefulness to many, and of profit to yourself!

You give me also reason to hope that the collection of ascetical works will soon be sent to the press.

I am just now finishing the *Evidences of Faith*. As soon as it is completed, I shall forward it to you, together with the other treatises that form the third volume of the collection. The work for nuns I shall not send, as you have it already.

Among the works destined for the third volume I shall forward to you the *Life of Father Paolo Cafaro*, of which I spoke to you some time ago, and which you told me to send. It is an account of the admirable life of a great apostolic worker and servant of God. Though short, it is replete with heroic virtues and apostolic labors, and will,

therefore, please every one that reads it. I have composed it amid the labors of the episcopate, and now, thanks be to God, it is finished.

I have recently had printed, also, a *Dissertation on Probabilism*,[1] enriched with considerable new matter not found in other treatises on that subject. I shall send you two copies so that you may publish it if you think fit. I have had only a small number printed, but I would be very

[1] This treatise, published for the first time in the year 1762, has special importance for those who would know the mind of the saint on the subject of Probabilism. In it he explicitly unfolds his own system of *Equiprobabilism*. Twelve years later (1774) in his work, entitled: "Exposition of the Author's System with Regard to the Regulating of Moral Actions," the saint wrote, as follows (n. 49): "On this subject I have read during the space of about thirty years, innumerable authors, Rigorists and Laxists, and I have continually besought God for the necessary light to fix a system which I might hold to, and thus not stray into error. At last, as I have declared at the beginning of this little work, I settled on a system for myself." He does this precisely in the *Dissertation* of which mention is here made, and to it we refer the reader, contenting ourselves with the following extract: "There are two questions that we propose to examine in the present treatise. The first, whether it is permissible to follow the *less probable* opinion. The second, whether in a case in which the two conflicting opinions are of *equal* or *apparently equal probability*, it is allowable to follow the *less safe*. With regard to the first question we shall quickly despatch it, as the solution is certainly evident. We affirm that *it is not allowed to follow the less probable opinion when the opinion which is in favor of the law, is notably and surely more probable; for etc.* . . . . . In answer to the second question, we affirm that *when the opinion which is less safe, is equally probable, it may be licitly followed, for etc.*" These two propositions contain, properly speaking, the system of Equiprobabilism taught and followed by the holy Doctor from that period. It would be beside the mark to bring forward against this, the fact that in the fifth edition of the *Moral Theology*, published in the year following (1763), we find a different treatise on *Probabilism*, the one that had been in the two preceding editions; for this insertion, as we shall see later on, occurred through negligence on the part of Remondini, and was the cause of deep chagrin to the saint

glad to see the work circulated, as it is really a new treatment, much new material, not hitherto touched upon by other writers, being collected together in a special dissertation.

A part of this treatise is contained in the Latin *Instruction*, but not the whole.[1]

I shall send you two copies of the little work on *Faith*, and these corrected ones, should any corrections be necessary. I am pleased that you have resolved to publish the edition in quarto; it will be an excellent thing.

For pity's sake, do not say another word to me about my portrait. What a shame would it not be for me, and what a disgrace to the collection, which is a spiritual one, to have it seen that in giving this work to the press, I had the vanity to have my portrait taken! People wish to read something that will be profitable to them, and not to look at the portrait of a poor wretch like myself.

Accept, Illustrious Sir, my most humble respects, and believe me,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO DE LIGUORI,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

who had labored so hard to complete the new *Dissertation* for this fifth edition.

[1] However, it is not so very small a part; for on comparing the second edition of the *Homo Apostolicus* with the first, we find that in the first the treatise *De Conscientia Probabili* contains only 18 numbers, whilst in the second it contains 42.

LETTER 101.

To the Same.

He informs him of his reasons for delaying to send the third volume of the spiritual writings, and asks for information about the printing of the *Homo Apostolicus*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, May 5, 1763.

Most Illustrious Sir: For a long time past I have not received a word of news from you.

I have delayed sending you the rest of the works destined for the complete edition of my spiritual writings, for the following reason. Until now I have been waiting for the approbation of the work on *Faith*, and this was owing to a mistake of mine in believing that the *memorial* was with the ministers, whereas, in reality, it was in the hands of the reviser. But, thanks be to God, the *memorial* has been expedited. My desire to forward this work together with the others has been the cause of my delay.

I pray you, let me know how far advanced the printing of the Latin *Instruction* is. People are continually asking me for it, and I do not know what answer to give them. I trust, however, it is now finished.

I hope that, when I send the remainder of my spiritual writings, you will at once set to work at the printing of the edition.

I beg you to accept my most humble respects.

Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 102.

To the Same.

Being constrained to make some changes in the *Moral Theology*, he asks the publisher whether he would, in that case, be satisfied to re-publish it. He makes also a few remarks pertaining to the edition of his spiritual writings, and again inquires about the *Homo Apostolicus*, expressing his surprise that, although nearly two years in press, it has not yet been given to the public.

ARIENZO, June 12, 1763.

Most Illustrious Sir: As the name of Busenbaum has fallen into almost universal disrepute, and as I have had the misfortune of acting as commentator on this unlucky author, the very mention of whose name excites as much abhorrence as that of Luther, my confrères in the Congregation have counselled me to eliminate from my *Moral Theology* the text of Busenbaum, and thus make the work entirely my own, adding to it, however, the definitions, distinctions, and fundamental propositions, or principles, that the work requires. They would leave intact my dissertations at the end of the work, but would have me exclude all the additions made by Father Zaccaria, which additions were valuable at one time, but are now become as odious as the writings of Busenbaum.[1] In short, the work would be entirely my own, as people would nowadays

[1] Zaccaria and Busenbaum had become equally odious, and for the same reason as all the members of the Society of Jesus. Teachings the most harmless and just served as pretexts for persecution to all those who had sworn to destroy this illustrious Institute. Jansenists and false philosophers, supported by the royalists, recognized in its members the great obstacle to the triumph of their ideas, subversive of all order. Consequently, they had recourse to every means to calumniate them and compass their destruction. In Portugal they were successful, as we have seen, in the year 1759. And continuing their furious warfare against the Society, at length,

have it. They all praise the work, but at the same time censure me for having chosen to commentate Busenbaum. I desire now to find out whether you would publish the work, if the said alterations were made. Many emendations will be introduced, also many additions. These latter, though short, are numerous.

in 1773, through the influence of the Bourbon courts, they succeeded by iniquitous means in obtaining its total suppression.

What the feelings of St. Alphonsus were on this occasion, we may read in his *Life*, written by Father Tannoia, as also in several letters of the holy Doctor. The enemies of religion had completely succeeded in their design, and the name of Jesuit became a byword among the ill-informed. Hence the anxiety and endeavor of the the saint to avert from himself and his *Moral Theology* the least shadow that might serve as a pretext to the wicked to involve him in a like fate, and thus impede the good which his writings and his Institute might bring to the Church and to souls. At the same time, the fact cannot be denied, and the course of this *Correspondence* will demonstrate it clearly, that St. Alphonsus did not hold all the opinions, nor the system embraced by some, we will say, by many Jesuits. There is such a thing as disputable points, and the saint, as every other man, guided himself in these according to his own lights and according to the reasons which seemed to him the best; never did he profess himself the absolute follower of any particular school or system. In all truth, therefore, could he and did he maintain that he was neither a Jesuit, nor a partisan of their teachings. Attached as he was to the Society of Jesus, and filled with veneration for it, he did not wish by this manner of speech to cast the least dishonor upon it. In the troublous condition in which things then were, the saint's whole endeavor was to guard his own Institute against the danger of suppression, and to have his writings, so thoroughly imbued with sound doctrine, in free circulation. No wonder, then, that he repelled the charge of being a Jesu t or an ardent partisan of the Jesuits! Besides, the affair deeply concerned the conscience of the saint as it was for conscience' sake he had established and maintained his system of *Moral*. In conclusion, if we bear in mind that Remondini was in constant dread of seeing the works of the holy Doctor suppressed and himself suffer considerable loss therefrom, we may comprehend the reason of St. Alphonsus' frequent reassuring and encouraging letters on the subject.

How deeply do I repent ever having chosen Busenbaum for the text of my commentaries! But who could have foretold the storm that was to burst forth against the unfortunate Busenbaum?

Cheer up! After so many delays I have, at last, obtained the approbation of my work on the *Evidences of Faith*. I had to do with a whimsical reviser, who has kept me waiting for nine months.

I am now having the approbation and the index of this little work printed. As soon as the printing is completed and the book bound, I shall forward it to you, together with my new *Dissertation on Probabilism*. This Dissertation is, indeed, a new work, which has been very favorably received by the learned. At the same time, I shall send the rest of my ascetical works which belong to the third volume of the complete edition projected by you.

All this time, however, I do not receive any news from you, not a single word, as to whether you have begun to print this complete edition or not.

You have been importunate in your requests for my portrait, a thing of no value whatsoever; but of that which is of value and is so eagerly desired, the printing of this work, you do not speak a single word.

Nor have you sent me any information concerning the Latin *Compendium*, or in other words, Latin *Instruction*. As you yourself wrote me some time ago, it will soon be two years since the work went to press. That press has a very slow motion, one revolution a year!

People are continually asking me: *When shall we get it? When shall we get it?* And I know not what to answer them. I pray you, let me know, at least, what reply I should give.

Yesterday I was speaking with some strangers from Sicily, who told me that my books are highly prized there.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 103.

To the Same.

He continues to speak on the subject of a new edition of *Moral Theology*.

Live Jesus, Joseph, and Mary!

ARIENZO, June 15, 1763.

I wrote to you last week. The present is an answer to a letter of yours I received this morning.

With regard to the *Compendium* [*Homo Apostolicus*], I am expecting it as soon as possible, so as to give it to my seminarians.

I spoke to you in my last letter of my project of making the *Moral Theology* a new work, which would preserve whatever was mine in the original, and which would, also, embody whatever new matter we may find necessary to introduce. I would omit Busenbaum entirely, not only the title-page, but also the text of this author, whose name is everywhere covered with opprobrium.

Since you give your consent to this new edition, I beg you to have a little patience. In a few days I shall call to my assistance two Fathers of my Congregation, and we shall arrange the work in the manner proposed.

We shall have to compose this book with the aid of the work as it has hitherto been printed; and as we are to expunge the text of Busenbaum, we must needs introduce a new order and system.

I am receiving censure from every quarter for having followed Busenbaum, instead of making the work exclusively my own.

It seems to me impossible to compose this new work alone, but I hope to be able to do it with the aid of a few companions.

As to the additions, which you desire to have immediately, I must say it is impossible for me to send them just now, as I have to select them from the *Compendium*, in which I inserted a great number, not to speak of those contained in the latest edition of the *Theology*. In poor health, and encompassed by the numerous cares of the episcopate, I am altogether unable to undertake the task of collecting these additions from the *Compendium* and other sources, so as to send them to you.

Please let me know what you think of the matter. Should you desire to have the *Theology* entirely my own, as I indicated, with the complete omissions of the text and name of Busenbaum, I shall see that this be done as soon as possible. If, on the contrary, you wish to have merely the additions, I shall have one or two companions come here and copy them for you; but this cannot be done before I have looked over the printed *Compendium*. Rest assured of one thing: with the complete elimination of Busenbaum my work would have a considerably larger sale. That is my opinion.

Awaiting a reply, I am, Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] With regard to the little work on *Faith*, all is

finished. During the coming week I shall forward it to you together with the rest of the ascetical works.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 104.

To the Same.

He sends some additions for a new edition of the *Moral Theology* to be made in conformity with the preceding editions. He replies also to some complaints of Remondini.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

[July, 1763].

Most Illustrious Sir: I am in receipt of your reply concerning the re-editing of the *Moral* with Busenbaum omitted.

For the present I shall send you all the additions proper for the work, marking distinctly the place, page, and line of each; but you must give me a little time for this, as I shall have to collect them and draw up a list of their respective places.

You tell me that you have decided to omit the names of Busenbaum and Zaccaria from the work, and insert my name alone.

Remark that, as long as the text of Busenbaum is inserted, you must add, at least in the title-page, as I have done in the last edition: *juxta methodum Medullæ R. P. Hermanni Busenbaum.* This is necessary, in order that the reader may understand that the text is from another author; otherwise, the edition of the work, as it is at present, would appear ridiculous.

If you continue to employ the text of Busenbaum, you would do well, I think, not to omit the dissertations of Father Zaccaria, contained in the work, as they are very useful, indeed. However, do as you think best.

As you will be obliged to insert the additions and other

modifications which I shall send, it would please me very much if, in the treatise on *Conscience*, you eliminate the dissertation on *Probabilism* and substitute for it the new one I have lately composed, in comparison with which the old one is of no account. I beg you to do me this favor.

I shall send you, therefore, the additions for the reprinting of the *Moral*, as it has hitherto been published. In the meantime, I shall see that the work be composed and arranged in such a manner as to be entirely my own. You need have no anxiety concerning the method; for it will be the same as that pursued in the Italian *Instruction*, which is an excellent one.

I shall presently send you through Signor Agazzi, the little work on *Faith*, as also the dissertation on *Probabilism*.[1] I do not know whether the printing of the latter is yet finished. At the same time I shall forward the rest of the works destined for the third volume of the ascetical writings. Some are very anxious to see this complete edition.

How much pain do you not cause me by complaining, as you did the other day (if I mistake not), that a new edition of the Italian *Practice* is being printed at Naples! My dear Don Giambattista, can I prevent the publishers from printing whatever books they choose? Am I the king? This work is in constant demand by the publishers. For that matter, if you have any more copies of the *Practice*, send them here. You may rest assured they will have a ready sale, as the demand for them is continual. For goodness' sake, do not make this complaint again, as I am powerless to remedy it.

It is not true that this *Practice* will contain the new dissertation of my companions on *Communion*.[2] This

[1] "Short Dissertation on the Moderate Use of the Probable Opinion."

[2] "Refutation of the Letter and Rejoinder of Don Cipriano

pamphlet is still undergoing revision. It will be printed separately, or, perhaps, not at all.

I am exceedingly rejoiced to learn that the printing of the Latin *Instruction* is finished. Please send copies to Father Ferrara as soon as possible, so that my seminarians, at least, may procure this work, the priests having taken your Italian edition. There is, however, among the latter quite a number desirous of the Latin edition.

You must know that, during the past month, I have been ailing with catarrh of the chest, which has caused the physicians some anxiety. During the current month of July when passing through the town of Airola, I had another attack, more grievous, perhaps, than the preceding; but, thanks be to God, I have recovered somewhat. I have, therefore, ventured to dictate this letter to you, though I am still confined to my bed which, may it please the Lord to enable me to leave within the next ten days.

Your very humble and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

Aristasio to Mgr. de Liguori. An Examination as to the True Sentiments of Holy Church with regard to Frequent Communion. By a Priest of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer [Father Alessandro de Meo]." This work was published at Naples in the following year (1764) by Giuseppe di Domenico.

LETTER 105.

To the Same.

He sends him the rest of the ascetical writings destined for the complete edition, and speaks of the projected edition of his *Moral* with Busenbaum eliminated.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

[July, 1763.]

Most Illustrious Sir: I am sending you the rest of the spiritual writings destined for the third volume, and with them the index. The package contains also my new treatise on *Faith*, which is to have the third place in the volume.

I send you enclosed a very important addition to be inserted in the book on *Prayer*,[1] at the place indicated at the top of this sheet. The treatise on *Prayer* is to head the second volume of the collection, as is indicated in the second index which I have already sent you.

I have given orders to my companions to collect, as soon as possible, all the additions destined for the *Moral Theology* and to send them to me, each one written separately, with the place to which it belongs indicated. As soon as I receive them, I shall forward them to you. I say: *to my companions*, for at present I am sick abed, not having yet recovered from my last severe attack. I cannot apply to work.

I expect very soon the new edition of the *Homo Apostolicus*.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] After writing the above, I received another

[1] "Prayer, the Great Means of Salvation."

letter from you in which you ask me to spur on my companions to complete, as soon as possible, the projected *Moral* with Busenbam eliminated. This I shall do. Meantime, I shall defer sending the additions.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 106.

To the Same.

He continues to speak of the spiritual writings, of the Italian *Instruction* printed at Naples, and of the projected edition of the *Moral Theology*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

[July, 1763.]

Most Illustrious Sir: This morning I received your letter of July 2d, from the second part of which I learn that you have already received my reply.

The works that belong to the third volume of the complete edition, are all ready for forwarding, as is likewise the abridgment in manuscript of the *Life of Father Cafaro*, a wonderful life, indeed. Together with these I shall send the work on *Faith* and the *Dissertation on Probabilism*. The latter is being translated into Latin, to be inserted in the *Moral Theology*, instead of the one now contained in that work. This new *Dissertation* is altogether superior to the old one.

I should be very much pleased if this *Dissertation* in Italian, which is a short one, were printed separately and extensively circulated.

Once more, I beg you not to make complaints about Father Ferrara or me on the subject of the new edition of the Italian *Instruction;* for neither of us had the work reprinted. The booksellers are the ones to blame. If I mis-

take not, several of them were unanimous in the wish to re-edit it, and we were powerless to prevent them.

Nor is it true that the *Dissertation on Communion*, composed by my companions, has been added to this edition. It has not yet appeared, being still in the hands of the revisers.

I am anxiously waiting to receive the Latin *Instructions* from you as soon as the opportunity offers of sending them by sea.

To-day I shall write to Naples, to tell them to forward to you the work on *Faith* and the other treatises through Signor Agazzi; however, I think they must first find a vessel sailing for Rome.

I pray you, as soon as you receive these works for the third volume, give me the satisfaction of hearing at once that you have begun the printing of the complete edition, which I should like to see before I die.

We now come to a more important point, I mean the large work on *Moral*.

I had given orders to collect together the notes for a new edition preserving the text of Busenbaum; but perceiving from your last letter that you desired to print the work as entirely my own, as was designed, I have written to my companions to use all haste to finish it. Meanwhile, I shall defer sending the additions.

Should you, however, change your mind and wish to have these notes for a new edition of the work with Busenbaum's text, let me know, and I shall forward them to you. In my opinion, it would be better to have a little patience and wait till the work is arranged in the manner intended. And for this, my dear Giovanni Battista, no matter how diligently my companions may labor, some time will be required before everything is completed. Al-

though I have selected three very able subjects for the task, the amount of work to be done is considerable.

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] You will find my little treatise on *Faith* in the packet of the works destined for the third volume.

I add a suggestion which has not yet received your approbation, and, I fear, will not receive it. I subjoin it, yet without any intention of importuning you thereby. You mention to me that the people now want to have books in the large folio style; but I tell you, and I can assure you, that all with whom I have spoken, would prefer to have the *Moral Theology* in quarto, as this size is the most convenient, both for reading and studying. A more unhandy form than the large folio can hardly be imagined. People would pay a higher price for the quarto edition, especially since it would be printed in small Roman characters. I am aware that money would be saved by using the large folio form, but, on the other hand, you could raise somewhat the price of the quarto. All this is, I am afraid, idle talk, although the truth. Do, then, what seems best to you. The *Epitome*[1] of Father Mansi is, indeed, a beautiful work, and I shall not omit to insert it in my book.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

1 "Joannis Dominici Mansi, Congregationis Matris Dei, Epitome doctrinæ moralis et canonicæ ex operibus Benedicti XIV." This work was added to the *Moral Theology* of the saint.

LETTER 107.

To the Same.

He abandons the project of eliminating the text of Busenbaum from the *Moral Theology*.—His reasons for this.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

[NOCERA, August, 1763.]

Most Illustrious Sir: I have come here to Nocera for the sake of recuperating from my severe sickness. I had begun re-writing the *Moral Theology* omitting the text of Busenbaum. But it was not long before I perceived that this re-writing of the whole work together with the introduction of a new arrangement, made necessary by the suppression of the text of Busenbaum, is not the work of six months or a year. Indeed, I have employed three Fathers at this work for several weeks. I have labored at it myself, sick as I am; but in spite of all this, we have not been able to finish even the treatise on *Conscience*, to accomplish which twenty days more will scarcely suffice.

Hence, I conclude that to compose and arrange all the other treatises, of which many are much larger than that on *Conscience*, two years would hardly be enough. For the present, therefore, I think it would be better for me to collect and arrange the many notes required for the new edition, and send them to you to be inserted in the *Moral*, as already published, clearly indicating the page, paragraph and line, to which each belongs. Then, I do not know whether, even after two years, I should be able to send you the work recast in the manner proposed. Indeed, I would not send this *Moral* excluding the text of Busenbaum, before I had reviewed it thoroughly and arranged whatever I found in the work of others that did not please me. I have acted in this way with the above-mentioned

treatise on *Conscience*, in which I changed many things that were not to my satisfaction. From the task I had in doing this I may judge how many points there would be in the completed work that would need alteration for the same reason. On the other hand I am now advanced in years, poor in health, and burdened, moreover, with the cares of the episcopate, which scarcely leave me time to breathe. Here I have been able to do something, because momentarily released from my charge. To send you the *Moral Theology*, therefore, composed as I would have it, appears to me impossible.

I have wished to let you know of this beforehand. In the meanwhile I shall arrange my notes, and send them to you as soon as they are ready. For your greater convenience I shall send you first those of the first volume, and the others later on, as I see you have already begun to print the new edition.

I pray you to let me have an answer very soon that I may know what to do.

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] There can be no doubt about the odium attaching nowadays to the name of Busenbaum. Certain it is, however, that till now he has been much praised and his method universally commended. La Croix has not been his only commentator; Franzoia, an author of the Rigorist School, has used his text; and my own book, though a commentary on Busenbaum, found ready sale on all sides.

As I have said, I could not trust myself to undertake the new *Moral*. My companions would have to do it; and I do not know whether the work, as composed by others, would be acceptable to you. I know that if others were to do it, I should find many defects, and many points needing

different arrangement. I expect an answer from you as soon as possible.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 108.

To the Same.

The same subject.--He proposes to him to print a new work, *The Country Confessor.*

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, August 26, 1763.

Most Illustrious Sir: I am anxiously waiting to know whether you have received the books, or rather the small works that constitute the third volume of the complete edition of my ascetical writings, as also those two other small treatises, entitled: *Dissertation on the Probable Opinion*, and, *The Evidences of Faith?*

In the work, *Evidences of Faith*, a notable error must be corrected, one that has slipped in through the negligence of the printer and which I discovered lately.

At page 80, line 5, it reads: *or the following Sunday.* This is a error. It should be: *and not the following Sunday.* On that account I send the enclosed slip, and I beg you to insert the same at once, at page 80, so that you will not forget it.

I am, at present, occupied with the arranging of all the additions destined for the large *Moral;* they are numerous and very useful. One or other treatise I worked over completely. A number of my companions are engaged with me in this work.

I have already written to you that it is an impossibility to re-write the work with the text of Busenbaum omitted. For my part, I cannot see how I shall be able to do it. I am an old man and sickly, and this is a work that would

require over two years to bring it to completion. Another thing that renders it impossible for me is my episcopal charge, which occupies all my time, and to which I am bound in conscience. I should have to confide the task to my companions; but, as far as I can judge, not one of them is able to do it as I should desire. We would, consequently, have a work which would please neither you nor me.

But enough of this subject. In my judgment, the additions with which the work is to be enriched, and the several treatises, which we have entirely re-written, will render the book much more valuable than it has hitherto been.

I await a reply. I have not received a letter from you for a long time, and I desire to know how to act in this matter. I am waiting also for the copies of the *Homo Apostolicus*.

Whilst at home in my diocese, I composed a small work very useful for the confessors of country people.[1] For it I had to steal every moment. It is on the same plan as a book now in circulation, entitled: "The Confessor in Hamlet and Village",[2] the work of a Neapolitan author, who does not publish his name. However, this anonymous work is too scant and insufficient for the confessors to whom it is addressed. My book is not limited to what concerns the practice of the confessor, but contains, besides, a summary in the vernacular of all the more important points of Moral Theology. It is not, indeed, an extensive work, but he who knows it thoroughly, will surely be able to hear confessions in the country. It was with that end in view that I composed it for the benefit of my diocese.

1 "Guide for Country Confessors."

2 The author of this work was Don Giuseppe Iorio, a priest of great learning and zeal, of whom St. Alphonsus speaks more than once in the course of this *Correspondence*.

Let me know whether you would like to publish it; I shall send it at once. I have had only a small number of copies printed for the use of my diocese, but I am sure that this work will have a larger circulation than the "Confessor in Hamlet and Village".

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*Postscript of Father Ferrara.*] Girolamo Ferrara of Naples presents his compliments to you. He has to inform you, to his great regret, that the person to whom he had committed eighty ducats last May, neglected to give them to Aurisicchio. Don Girolamo has consigned one hundred ducats to the latter to transmit to you, and has been given a receipt for the same. He presumes that Signor Aurisicchio will send you notice of it to-day.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 109.

To the Same.

He asks for news about a number of works sent to the publisher, and requests him to send the *Homo Apostolicus*. He speaks again of the *Moral Theology*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NOCERA, September 1, 1763.

Most Illustrious Sir: Yesterday I received a letter from you announcing that my two latest works had arrived, but you do not inform me whether you have received the box containing the rest of the treatises destined for the large edition of my ascetical works. I am in ignorance, also, as to whether the new *Dissertation on the Probable Opinion*, and the little work on *Faith* have arrived at their destina-

tion. I sent them to you quite a long time ago. I should regret very much to hear that these works have been lost, especially the ascetical ones, for the revision of them cost me much labor. As soon as you receive them, please send me word.

I have warned you, and I do the same again, that there is an error to be corrected in the book on *Faith*. It is only a word, but the correction is an important one. I have marked it on the enclosed slip.

I have already mentioned to you in several letters that, to eliminate Busenbaum, and rewrite the work entirely, is an impossibility. I should have to do it myself, but I would not attempt it; nor could I do so on account of my episcopal duties. Two years, at least, would be required for it; and not a single one of my companions could perform the work to my satisfaction. At present, as I wrote you before, I am engaged with three of my companions in inserting the additions where they belong. We are busy with the new *Dissertation on the Probable Opinion* also, translated into Latin, with a new treatise *De Actibus Humanis*, and with numerous important additions. I have been laboring at them for a month past, though my purpose in coming to Nocera was to recuperate after a severe attack of sickness. At present, however, thanks be to God, I feel better. If you have resolved to print this new edition in quarto, as you signified with regard to the edition with Busenbaum omitted, it will certainly improve the book and render it more acceptable to the reader.

I would request you not to eliminate anything from it as it now stands; for the *Prolegomena* of Father Zaccaria are beautiful, and the *Epitome* of Father Mansi is very useful. I repeat, then, do not suppress a single word; or some will assert that this edition is incomplete.

I have been waiting impatiently for the copies of the *Homo Apostolicus*, but I have, as yet, seen none. Your

letter announces, to my great disappointment, that they are not yet ready for shipping. Meanwhile, precious time is being wasted, and we shall have to wait till next year.

I return to the *Moral Theology*. Please let me know which of the two following propositions you prefer. Do you wish me to send you the additions for the first volume after they are finished and arranged? You could then begin the printing, the first volume being the largest since the greater part of the additions belong to it. Or would you prefer me to prepare the additions for the entire work, and then forward them to you? I shall do as you desire. But if you are in a hurry, as you intimated in your first letter, then I think it would be better to send you the additions for the first volume, as the printing of it will require considerable time.

I shall omit from the first volume the treatise on the *Precepts of the Church*, and add it to the second, which is less bulky. Tell me what you would like me to do.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] One word more. I mentioned to you already that I have had printed, for the use of my diocese, an abridgment [1] in the vernacular of the *Homo Apostolicus*. It forms a small volume, and will prove very useful, I think, for country confessors, containing, as it does, all the knowledge suitable for hearing confessions properly. I have had but a small number of copies printed. If you desire to have the book, let me know, and I shall send it at once.

At page 80 of the work on *Faith*, line 5, it reads: *or the*

[1] "Guide for Country Confessors."

following Sunday. This should be changed into: *and not the following Sunday.*

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 110.

To the Same.

The same subject.

Live Jesus and Mary!

NOCERA, September 21, 1763.

Most Illustrious Sir: The additions for the first volume of the *Moral* are finished.

Let me know whether you wish me to forward them at once, or whether you would rather I should wait and send all together, those of the second and third volumes included.

I would suggest that you commence the printing of the first volume immediately, as you intended, for the greater part of the additions and passages requiring correction, belongs to this volume. The additions for the second and third volumes do not constitute a fifth part of those for the first. In fact, it is not so much the additions that make the last-named so large, many of them being shorter than the passages for which they were substituted; it is the passages that are changed. There are many fine things in this volume, to hunt up and arrange which cost me much labor. You will, therefore, have a good deal of matter to print in the first volume. In case you do it at once, I shall send you the annotations and additions for the second and third volumes later on.

Use your own good pleasure in the matter, but let me know to what conclusion you come. Address your letters *to Naples*, and I shall see that I get them.

I am still at Nocera, but in a few days I shall return to my diocese.

Once more, I urge you to finish the little work [1] I sent you last week, with the request that you should print it as soon as possible. I am very anxious to get it soon. In case you are unable to do it as quickly as I desire, inform me of the fact, that I may take some other means of having it done. Still I trust you will do me this favor, seeing my earnest desire for it, and especially as the work is short. This you will see by the other sheets that I shall soon send, and which complete the volume.

I beg for a speedy answer, as it is a long time since I received a letter from you.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] I am eagerly awaiting the *Homo Apostolicus*.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER III.

To the Same.

He speaks of some books sent to the publisher, and urges him to hasten the printing of the *Guide for Country Confessors*.—Recommendations relative to the coming edition of the large *Moral*.

Live Jesus and Mary!

[October, 1763.]

Most Illustrious Sir: I have returned to my diocese. It is from there that I am now writing in reply to the two letters received from you.

The works destined to complete the large edition have,

[1] "Guide for Country Confessors."

it seems, not yet reached you, nor the *Evidences of Faith*, nor the *Dissertation on the Probable Opinion*. I am not surprised at the news. After sending them to you so long ago, I learned that the skipper, who was to have taken them to Rome to Signor Agazzi, unable to do so, was obliged to send them back to Naples. We then charged another with the box, and I understand it is now at Rome in the hands of Signor Agazzi.

Having these delays in mind, I sent the work for *Confessors in Villages*, or rather the greater part of the folios, by post. At the same time I despatched a letter, begging you to print the book at once.

I hope that, by the time this letter reaches you, you will have already received the folios of the said work. Have them revised immediately, I again entreat you, and print them at once, for I am very anxious to have the book appear as soon as possible with the approbation of Venice.

In a few days I shall transmit to you the rest of the folios, the title-page, and the manuscript introduction. I am thinking of sending all by post; for at this season, it is difficult to find an opportunity of sending them to Rome by water. This latter mode of forwarding them, would, besides, take much time, and I earnestly desire to have the work, as soon as possible, to distribute it among my diocesans. It will, I trust, have an immense sale on all sides.

I regret the expense you will incur by postage on the folios; but I am prepared to defray it myself. You need only indicate the amount. I trust, I shall have the consolation of hearing that you have already begun the reprinting, or, I should say, the printing of this book, for it has never yet been published.

I have twice suggested to you, and I again repeat, do not forget to print it in small Roman type; otherwise I shall be dissatisfied with it. I should like to see it in the

same type as the large *Moral*, or, at least, in one similar.

Speaking of the large *Moral*, I take this occasion to inform you that I have finished all the additions. Nothing remains but to copy into the blank book I have to send you a few that are not yet transcribed.

My sickness has been sent me by Providence to enable me to finish this work; for had I not gone to Nocera, it would have been very difficult for me to apply myself as I have done. Two years would not have been sufficient for its accomplishment, had I not quitted my diocese; besides, at Nocera, I had several companions to assist me, and the Lord granted me the strength to labor eight or nine hours a day.

Do not eliminate from the *Moral*, I pray you, the *Prolegomena* of Father Zaçcaria, as it is a learned work, which has received general approval.

You might, therefore, continue the printing of all that precedes the first treatise of the *Moral*, I mean that on *Conscience*. But when you come to it, you will have to stop, for it has been completely changed, as you will see when I send you the additions.

I retract what I have just written in the last sentence, for I have concluded upon reflection that you cannot print the index before finishing the first volume, at least; otherwise, the pages could not be arranged, since, in the process of reprinting, many will be changed. I shall have the additions copied as soon as possible and send them to you *via* Rome.

I remain,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] After writing the above, I yield to your pressing demand to forward the additions at once. I send you all

belonging to the first volume. They are the most copious, those of the second and third volumes being much shorter.

I act thus that you may be able to commence the reprinting immediately. It will not be long before I transmit the additions to the second and third volumes. As, however, the affairs of my diocese need much attention on account of my absence, I do not know whether I shall be able to forward them as soon as I desire. Meantime, you have in the first volume abundant matter for printing, it being much larger than the other two. I shall send it next week.

I have marked distinctly in the additions (I refer to those written on separate slips) the places to which they belong, and have indicated the pages, numbers, columns, and lines, together with the asterisks and references.

I beg you to write to Signor Agazzi to be careful to forward to you without delay the things I am sending him. I fear that he performs this duty very reluctantly, for in spite of all that I write, he never sends me an answer. You must particularly recommend to him the writings I am now sending, I mean the additions; for should they be lost, I do not know whether I would have the time and strength to rewrite them.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 112.

To the Same.

He requests him to insert in the *Guide for Country Confessors* the approbation of the king of Naples, and alludes to a certain eulogy bestowed on his work on *Faith* and the *Dissertation on the Probable Opinion*. He speaks also of forwarding the additions for the *Moral*.

Live Jesus and Mary!

ARIENZO, October 14, 1763.

Most Illustrious Sir: Pardon me for sending you by letter the remaining sheets of my new work; for, as I wrote to you before, I am extremely anxious to have it published as soon as possible. The needs of my diocese call for it, and I attach great importance to its publication.

I received your last letter, dated September 24, from which I learn that you have received the box of books; but you do not say a word about the letter containing the first folios of the new work. I trust you will have received them before this reaches you, and commenced the printing in accordance with my request. You signified such to be your intention in the letter you wrote me, declaring that you were waiting for them in order to print them as quickly as possible.

Once more, I beg you, do not lose time, for, I repeat, I am very anxious for the publication of this work.

On the first page insert the ecclesiastical approbation. After that I should like you to place the approbation of the king of Naples, in the manner indicated on the slip inserted at the beginning of the work. This little book will be very useful everywhere, though I have composed it especially for my own diocese. As the government is very strict here (they will not permit to be printed outside of Naples such books as have not been approved by the

king), I deemed it necessary to insert the royal approbation, thus to prevent the book from being interdicted at Naples. Be careful to insert it.

I repeat a recommendation I have already made: use small Roman type similar to that employed for the folios I am sending you. You need have no anxiety in regard to the sale. I hope to dispose of four or five hundred copies in my diocese alone. The rest I shall send to our houses, where our Fathers will attend to their sale. This book will sell more rapidly than other works of the kind, for it contains the very substance of *Moral Theology*, and is much cheaper.

I rejoice to hear that the treatises destined for the third volume of my ascetical works have arrived safe. I was afraid they might be lost. Now that I am occupied with the government of my diocese, I have hardly time to breathe, and it would be very difficult for me to work at them and arrange them as I have done. I hope you will soon tell me that you have begun the printing of the complete edition.

In regard to the two works: the *Dissertation on the Probable Opinion*, and the *Evidences of Faith*, I wish to tell you that yesterday I received a letter from a religious, one of the most learned men of the day, the Abbot dell' Aquila,[1] Professor at the Royal University, informing me that in the Dictionary which he is publishing, he will speak in eulogy of the *Evidences of Faith.* "This work has pleased me very much," he says, "because *I find in it the most abstruse questions of religion explained with brevity and clearness.*" As to the *Dissertation on the Probable Opinion*, he declares that he prefers it to any work that has appeared on this subject.

A word now about the additions for the *Moral.* I told you last week that I would send you *via* Rome the additions belonging to the first volume. But they write me

[1] Don Prospero dell' Aquila, Abbot of Monte Vergine.

from Naples that it is difficult just now to forward them to Rome by water, as was usually done. I have, therefore, resolved to transmit them by a more secure route, that is, to confide them to a friend of mine who is going to Rome in November. Meantime, I expect to prepare the additions destined for the second and third volumes, and send them all together, and, as I said, by a more secure route. I dread these additions being lost on the way, for it would be morally impossible for me to repeat the work I managed to accomplish with my companions, on the occasion of my sojourn at Nocera for my health.

Meantime, please write to Signor Agazzi and instruct him to transmit to you the box containing these manuscripts as soon as he receives it.

I am waiting for the copies of the *Homo Apostolicus*, also, for a letter from you acknowledging the receipt of the additions.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] Please acknowledge at once the receipt of this letter. Accept me compliments.

Live Jesus and Mary!

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 113.

To the Same.

He speaks of the despatch of the additions for the *Moral*, and states his reason for having his works printed at Venice rather than at Naples.

Live Jesus and Mary!

ARIENZO, October 24, 1763.

Most Illustrious Sir: In my last letter, I wrote that I would yield to your solicitations and forward the additions belonging to the first volume. I was, however, unable to find a favorable opportunity to send them to Rome, and I am now thinking of sending them to you by a surer route, that is, through the medium of a friend. For some time past I have been occupied in preparing these additions, as also those of the second and third volumes. I completed the task to-day and prepared the writings for shipment. Next month, taking advantage of the opportunity to which I referred, I shall transmit them to you, *via* Rome, through Signor Agazzi.

I beg you to write to Signor Agazzi to secure the little box. If these papers should go astray, I could not rewrite them.

When you print the work, do not forget to insert the writings of Father Zaccaria and Father Mansi, as they are very useful.

By this time, I trust, you have received not only the first, but also the second batch of folios of the new work, entitled: *Guide for Country Confessors*. Have it revised immediately, and print it in small Roman type. I repeat it: I am extremely anxious to see this work printed at Venice, for at Naples I have encountered a crotchety reviser, a man certainly little versed in Moral Theology who, from the very first, began to contradict me, without right or reason, in a

number of points. For the sake of my peace of mind, therefore, I desired to have the book published at Venice, and that as soon as possible.

I am waiting for the *Homo Apostolicus.*

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 114.

To the Same.

He sends the additions spoken of in the last letter.—Various recommendations.

Live Jesus and Mary!

ARIENZO, October 25, 1763.

Most Illustrious Sir: I send you enclosed all the additions, those of the first, as well as those of the second and third volumes.

For each addition, I was careful to indicate the exact page, number and line, a thing that cost me no little labor.

Before commencing to print the book, it would be well, I think, to arrange each addition and attach it with a wafer at the place in which it belongs, as is marked at the beginning of every addition. You might use for this purpose a copy of the last edition, published at Bologna in 1760.[1] Without this precaution, I am afraid the compositor might omit a number of additions, and the printing once finished, they could not be inserted.

The compositor will, therefore, have before his eyes each addition as he comes to the place for which it is destined.

[1] The fourth edition.

Moreover, some one should mark with a pen the reference-signs or asterisks corresponding to the wafered additions. I did this with the second edition. I sent you a complete copy with the additions attached to their respective places, and with the references properly indicated.

For this, you will need a person experienced in such work, one who understands the printed text: otherwise, a great many errors may slip in; the more so, as certain points will have to be enlarged, and others suppressed, as I have indicated in the manuscript.

I entreat you to reflect attentively on what I have just written, and tell the person who will have charge of the printing, to read this letter before beginning the work, and not to fail to insert all the additions at their respective places. This person, I repeat, should be experienced and able to understand the printed text, else there will result numberless errors, for which you and I shall have to blush.

Rest assured that, with the additions I am sending you, you will possess a *Moral* unequalled, at least for its numerous citations and the new decrees that it contains. Certainly, no other work has them.

Please do not eliminate the *Prolegomena* of Father Zaccaria and the *Epitome* of Father Mansi. Some writers disdain to insert in their works the compositions of others; but for my part, I am not in the least opposed to it, as I have in view the general good. Insert, likewise, the other printed appendix.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] The sending of the additions furnishes me an opportunity to transmit to you a second time my new book for country confessors. It is a long time since I sent you the folios of this work by post, but you have informed me

lately that you never received them. Then I took the trouble to rewrite the work, and arranged everything that was necessary.

I beg you once more to print it as quickly as possible, that I may be able soon to sell it in my diocese and elsewhere, for many are asking for it.

This little book will, I trust, do a great amount of good. That is the reason the devil has taken so much trouble to prevent its appearance.

As soon as you receive the little box, please send me word. Till then I shall have no rest, through fear of losing this book, which I cannot again commence. Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

Please tell the compositor, also, the reviser, to insert the marginal numbers at the places in which they are wanting in the large *Moral;* for through the negligence of the compositor they have been frequently omitted. I speak of the last edition of the *Moral.*

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 115.

To the Same.

He promises to send him a new copy of the *Guide for Country Confessors.* — Recommendations relative to the coming edition of the *Moral* and the complete edition of the ascetical works.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA DE' GOTI, November 13, 1763.

Most Illustrious Sir: I am pleased to learn from your last letter that you have received the little works. But on the other hand, I am sorry that the *Guide for Country Confessors* has not yet reached you. I sent it by post,

one part at first, and the remainder on another occasion. God knows in what nook both are detained! What causes me the most regret is the fact that I had revised the whole copy sent, and introduced into it many slight emendations.

But enough. I shall revise the work once more and send it to you, not by post, but by the courier. For this I shall avail myself, as you advise me, of Signor Giovannantonio Moschini. I have already written to ascertain his address at Naples.

You neglected to mention whether this friend of yours is a bookseller or a merchant. Please let me know his business at once. I have written to Naples to have inquiries made concerning him, especially among the booksellers, from whom, I trust, we shall receive some intelligence. I shall then transmit to you, through this Signor Moschini, the second copy.

Should you, however, receive the first copy meanwhile, have it revised at once and printed, I pray you. Oh, how many are longing for this work!

With regard to the additions for the *Moral*, I inform you, I think I mentioned it before, that I have sent them to you through a friend of mine, who undertook to see that they reach Signor Agazzi at Rome. All the additions are together, those of the second and third volumes with those of the first. Please write once more to Signor Agazzi to secure them. They have all been forwarded.

Do not fail, I beg you, to insert the writings of Father Zaccaria and Father Mansi. They are very instructive and give an extra value to the work.

I am waiting for the *Homo Apostolicus*. Send it to me at the first favorable opportunity. Tell me soon that you have begun the printing of the complete edition of my ascetical writings, so much desired by many. You now have all my ascetical works. I entreat you to afford me

soon the consolation of seeing them published in one edition.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 116.

To the Same.

He recommends him to print the *Guide for Country Confessors*, and to circulate the *Homo Apostolicus*.

Live Jesus and Mary!

SANT' AGATA DE' GOTI, December 2, 1763.

Most Illustrious Sir: I am in receipt of two esteemed letters from you. In reply I must state that last week I confided the packet to Signor D. Giovannantonio Moschini. It contains all the additions for the *Moral*.

I had already sent it to be forwarded to Agazzi, but having received your letter in good time, I despatched to Naples to have the box returned; fortunately, it had not yet left Naples for Rome, and I had it transmitted to Signor Moschini who, by this date, I trust, has sent it to you.

I put into the box also a second copy of the *Guide for Country Confessors*, in which I have inserted a number of small additions; I took the trouble to correct and arrange the work again, so as to send it to you complete, divining, perhaps, what would occur and what, in fact, did occur, as you informed me, that you had received the second batch of folios, and not the first. God knows into what nook this latter may have fallen!

I repeat my request to you to have the book printed as

soon as possible after the receipt of the folios. Do not omit to insert the royal approbation which, you will perceive, is printed at the beginning. Once more I beg you to print the work in small Roman type and in duodecimo, for thus it will be more handy.

I expect to receive the *Homo Apostolicus* as soon as God supplies a vessel to bring them to me.

If you have any copies of the Italian *Instruction*, send them to Father Ferrara; for here at Naples all the copies have been sold, and people are still asking for it.

I hope to have the happiness of hearing that you have commenced printing the ascetical writings. I perceive you no longer say anything about it; but I can assure you, this edition will have a great sale, as the public is very anxious for it. I am afraid that death will overtake me before I shall have the consolation of beholding the collection printed.

With regard to the *Homo Apostolicus*, I request you to circulate the work far and wide throughout the Christian world. If I mistake not, the book has been praised even in Germany; at least, so I am told. It is a work that can be used in seminaries for young men who are beginning the study of Moral Theology. I know for a fact that the Jesuits, when preparing for the examination for jurisdiction, make use of the early edition of the *Homo Apostolicus*, though so full of mistakes, as to disgust the reader.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 117.

To the Same.

He thanks the publisher for some books presented to him, and sends some additions for the *Guide for Country Confessors*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA DE' GOTI, December 20, 1763.

Most Illustrious Sir: I received lately your esteemed letter in which I learned of the generosity that prompted you to send me as a present the *Bible* commentated by Duhamel,[1] fifty copies of the *Homo Apostolicus*, and one hundred *Meditations*, in 24mo.

I am extremly obliged to you for your kindness. I shall take care to secure these works from Signor Ernandez, and have the other copies of the *Homo Apostolicus* sold for you as quickly as possible.

I learn from your letter that you have not yet received the first folios of the *Guide for Country Confessors*, which I sent to you in the beginning, under seven *carlini* postage. But it is useless to speak on that subject. Several weeks ago, I despatched to you through Signor Moschini a packet containing all the additions for the large *Moral*, and I also enclosed a second copy of the book in question, namely, the *Guide*, into which I introduced all necessary emendations. I hope that by this time everything will have reached you in safety.

I send you the enclosed sheet containing two little additions to certain passages which should be arranged in better form in the book. Permit me to make a recommendation relative to these additions and to all those contained in the packet, of which there is a considerable number. Please

[1] Jean Baptist du Hamel published, among other works, a *Biblia Sacra, . . . una cum selectis annotationibus . . . . Prolegomenis, Tabulis . . . . illustrata.*

attach with a wafer, in a copy of the work, each addition in its proper place. I have marked distinctly the respective places to which they belong. This should be done before you commence printing, else a great many necessary things will be omitted.

Do not forget to begin, as soon as you can, the printing of the complete edition, otherwise called the *Collection of Ascetical Writings*. It is eagerly sought after.

As soon as you receive the little box containing the additions, relieve my anxiety by letting me know, I beg you.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 118.[1]

To the Same.

He sends an important addition for the *Moral Theology*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA DE' GOTI, January 19, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: For a long time past I have had no letter from you. At present I have nothing to write except to ask you to keep and insert at its proper place, the en-

[1] According to the chronological order we are following, this would be the proper place for a very lengthy letter of January 16, 1764, entitled: "Apology to a Letter of a Religious concerning the Use of the Equi-Probable Opinion." But as this letter has been already published in a number of collections, we omit it here so as not to make the volume too bulky. We have acted in like manner with certain other important letters belonging to the *Second Series* of the *Special Correspondence*, such as the "Letter to a Religious on the Apostolic Manner of Preaching", and the "Letter to a Bishop on the Great Utility of the Holy Missions".

closed addition for the *Moral Theology*. It is important, inasmuch as it is a retraction I have found necessary to make of an opinion contained in the work. I changed this opinion lately in consequence of a case that occurred in my diocese.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] I trust that by this you have received the packet containing all the additions, as also a new copy of the *Guide for Country Confessors*, rearranged in a style similar to the first.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 119.

To the Same.

He again recommends the printing of the ascetical collection and speaks of a *Letter of Apology* to be inserted at the end of the *Guide for Country Confessors*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA [January] 29, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: Your letter has just come to hand and I see by it that you have not yet received the packet. I hope, however, that it will have arrived by the time you receive this; I beg you to inform me of the fact at once, and free me from anxiety.

The copies of the *Homo Apostolicus* have arrived at Manfredonia. The vessel is, however, quarantined, I am told, and I have been unable as yet to get the books.

Yes, it is true that we have no more copies of the Italian *Instruction*. Send some as soon as possible.

Your letter leads me to hope that once you have finished

the printing of the *Moral*, I may see you begin the complete edition of my ascetical writings. Do not forget: as soon as the *Moral* is completed, begin the ascetical collection. Let me see it printed before I die. From all that I hear, it will have an immense sale.

I have written an *Apologetic Rejoinder* [1] to a letter of a religious in which he takes me to task for not following in *Moral*, as I ought, the Rigorist System.

The *Rejoinder* is short, but replete with matter. Those who have read it, are much pleased with it. It should be inserted at the end of the *Guide for Country Confessors*. As soon as I have finished it, I shall forward it to you. It will require no more than a single folio or so.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 120.

To the Same.

He sends him the *Apologetic Rejoinder* mentioned in the preceding.

Live Jesus and Mary!

SANT' AGATA, February 14, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: I am very glad to hear that you have received the packet containing the additions, as also the little work for *Country Confessors*.

I herewith send you a new sheet; it was not a thing to be put in the packet. It should be inserted at the end of the aforesaid work. As soon as you receive it, inform me of

[1] Mention has been made of this in the note to the preceding letter.

the fact, for I am very anxious to have it inserted in the work. As regards the work itself, I hope that you have already begun to print it as you promised.

I am daily expecting some news about the books sent to Manfredonia. I have even written twice to Signor D. Matteo Ernandez, but as yet have received no answer. I think the quarantine is over, at least, so I am informed. But enough on this subject. As soon as the books arrive, your desire to have them circulated will be complied with.

I retain ever the firm hope that as soon as the edition of the *Moral* is completed, you will begin work on the complete edition, otherwise called *Collection of Ascetical Writings.*

When you have finished the *Guide for Country Confessors*, send me some copies. I shall have them sold without delay.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 121.

To the Same.

A correction to be inserted in the *Moral.*

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, February 17, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: Last week I wrote you how happy I was to hear that you had received the packet.

I now send you the enclosed little sheet to be inserted in the *Moral* at the place indicated. The first addition must be changed and this substituted for it.

I trust that by this time you have received also the letter in which I enclosed a printed folio, to be added to the *Guide for Country Confessors*. It is a reply relative to the use of the probable opinion.[1]

As soon as you receive the letter containing the said folio, be so kind as to inform me; or let me know if you have not received it, even after the present letter reaches you.

No more at present.

I remain

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 122.

To the Same.

He speaks of a correction to be made in the title-page of the *Guide for Country Confessors*. He expresses his regret that the new edition of the *Moral* was very imperfect, and recommends to the publisher to substitute the new treatise *De Conscientia* for the old one.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, March 1, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: Yesterday I received another letter from you, as also the three title-pages accompanying it. In that of the *Guide*, the following is not altogether correct: *Revised and Enlarged by the Author, and containing at the End an Apologetic Dissertation.* The latter is not a dissertation, but a reply in which I answer certain objections of a religious, which objections are not at all doctrinal. It should be, therefore, an *Apologetic Rejoinder* and not a *Dissertation*, the more so, since it is very short. It has been

[1] "The Apologetic Rejoinder" mentioned in the preceding letters.

already printed, and I sent it to you some weeks ago in a letter as it was not worth while forwarding it in the packet.

I entreat you not to publish the book before you have inserted this *Rejoinder*. If, perchance, it has been lost on the way, let me know, and I shall send you another copy.

We have written repeatedly to Signor Ernandez, but have received no answer. Only yesterday word came from Naples that the vessel with the books is at Manfredonia, but it must make the severe quarantine of forty days. Here, then, is another delay. But enough of this: as soon as the books arrive, I shall attend to their sale, and recommend the same to Father Ferrara.

I learn that you have already reprinted the *Moral;* but it is the old one. I imagine you must have placed at the end of the book the additions that were to be inserted; for in all likelihood they reached you only after the greater part of the printing was completed. Now, the best and most important additions are those belonging to the first volume, especially those destined for the first book.[1] But it is idle to talk on this matter, what is done is done.

To tell the truth, I could not help feeling grieved, for between the old edition and the new one, which I had hoped to see published, the difference is as great as between heaven and earth. Owing to the new additions, the entire *Moral*, and in particular the first book which is, so to speak, the foundation of the work, would have gained very much in clearness. Moreover, many important questions have been strengthened with additions, others have been corrected. And if, indeed, my work, as far as additions and corrections are concerned, is finished, it is none the

[1] The saint alludes to the treatises *De Conscientia* and *De Actibus Humanis*, composed at Nocera in the preceding year (see Letters 107 and 109), and to the ". hort Dissertation on the Use of the Probable Opinion". As will be seen from the letter of September 15, 1765, he had translated this dissertation into Latin, and desired to have it inserted in the new edition of the *Moral*.

less true that to get them all in shape and proper order, I myself, together with the companions assisting me, was employed seven or eight hours every day for two months last summer. In doing this I have, I may say, even risked my life, for I underwent this labor when I had not yet fully recovered from an almost mortal sickness with which I had been afflicted only a short time previously. I hurried with the work, as I thought you were waiting for it. Certainly, you would have had to wait only a few months. However, as I remarked before, what is done is done. I regret that these additions and corrections, the fruit of so much labor, will lie idle so long. I beg you to have them, at least, carefully preserved that they may not be lost. If this misfortune should happen, I cannot answer for myself to begin them anew.

One remark I wish to make is this: it would be well to change the treatise *De Conscientia*, and substitute for it the one I last wrote. The former is, I acknowledge, very confused. You might, therefore, have this new one printed and omit the old.

It is not a bad idea to have informed me of this new edition; for knowing this, those who may wish to purchase the *Moral Theology* according to my latest emendations, will not be deceived by buying the old work. Let me know how soon you will begin a new edition, that I may inform my subjects and friends.

I see that on the title-page, the name of Busenbaum has been omitted. Now, anyone who will read the text in the body of the work and then see my comments thereon, if he is not aware that the text is from another author, will esteem me altogether stupid, thinking, as he must, that I am the author of both the text and the commentary.

What harm would it be to mention Busenbaum, if it were only to prevent this confusion? At least you could insert the following on the title-page: *Adest autem, in*

corpore operis, textus alterius antiqui professoris scientiæ moralis, cui ab initio Auctor suas adnotationes adnectere placuit; these or similar words.[1] But do as you think best.

I am, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 123.

To the Same.

He complains of the high price of the *Homo Apostolicus*, and speaks of one or two works he would like to compose.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, March 26, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: I received your last letter from which I learn that you have nearly finished printing the *Country Confessor*.[2] I thank you for your present. As soon as the copies arrive, I shall have them sold among my clergy.

The *Homo Apostolicus*, I have been informed, has arrived at Naples. Father Ferrara, who is here on a casual visit, tells me that the price is too high. I regret this, for here in Naples, when people think the price somewhat dear, they will have nothing to do with the book; and this they will do the more readily in the present case, as many will recall the old *Homo Apostolicus* which, I understand, was much cheaper.

1 Remondini failed to comply with the wishes of the saint. He made no addition or correction, either in the title-page or in the first book. Thus, through his fault, the old dissertation on Probabilism was retained. We have made this remark before, note 1, Letter 100, p. 203.

2 "Guide for Country Confessors."

I thank you for the copies of the *Moral Theology*, also. But I hope that by July, as you promised me, you will have begun the printing of the newly-revised *Moral*. Certainly, the difference between this and the preceding editions, is as great as between heaven and earth.

My time is altogether taken up with the duties of the episcopate. Were this not the case, I should write some new work. I have begun a compendium of the history of the Council of Trent according to Cardinal Pallavicino, restricting myself to what regards the definitions of dogma. I have begun, I say, but God knows when I shall finish.[1]

I should like also to compose a *Catechism* or *Series of Instructions* on the commandments and confession, for the use of the missions. I am afraid, however, that I shall be unable to do so from lack of time.[2]

Once you have finished the works of Benedict XIV., you will, I hope, fulfil your promise by commencing to print the ascetical collection.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

1 This compendium appeared in 1767 under the title: "Dogmatic Work against the Pretended Reformers".

2 This work was completed and published in 1768, and bore the title: "Instructions on the Commandments and Sacraments."

LETTER 124.

To the Same.

He points out the manner of inserting the additions in the fifth edition of the *Moral*, and in the edition about to be undertaken. He asks for information concerning a *Reply* that is to be made to his *Dissertation*, and declares that he will never retract the opinions contained in the latter, unless convinced of the contrary in essential points—a thing he believes impossible.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, March 31, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: I am in receipt of your last letter. My sincere thanks for the many beautiful books you send me.

As soon as the new course of Moral Theology begins at the seminary, I shall have your copies of the *Homo Apostolicus* put on sale.

You are thinking, you tell me, of inserting my additions at the end of the *Moral*, and you request my opinion on the matter.

I understand you to be speaking of the last edition, for in your letter you say: *for a small number of copies.* The idea is a good one. The reviser should, however, indicate at the beginning of each addition the place to which it belongs.

With regard to the future edition, all these notes should certainly be inserted in their respective places; for many points have been developed, and numerous others amended; many passages, too, are to be eliminated, and their places supplied by others.

I am very much obliged to you for the news you send me, namely, that the esteemed Father Patuzzi is composing a *Reply* to my *Dissertation.*

I am waiting with impatience for the work, and I beg you to send it to me as quickly as possible. Forward the sheets in your letters as soon as you print them.[1] I have, indeed, promised in my *Dissertation*, as well as in my *Letter*,[2] to retract publicly, whenever convinced of the truth of the opinion contrary to that which I maintain.

I have consulted on this question many learned and impartial men, some belonging to the Order of which Father Patuzzi is a member, others to that to which Father Berti belongs. After a calm, unprejudiced perusal of my *Dissertation*, they have declared that what I teach is clear, nay, that it is not merely an opinion but a demonstration. More than one learned person, former adherents of the contrary opinion, have changed their mind after reading my *Dissertation*, which they declare unanswerable.

If, however, any one wishes to reply to it merely for the sake of answering, he will certainly find matter enough even in the mere accessory details. But it is in essential points, as I have written both in my *Dissertation* and in my *Letter*, that I wish to be shown my error. If this is not done, I cannot in conscience retract; and if it becomes necessary, I shall write a new *Reply*.

I hold Father Patuzzi and Father Berti in high estimation, for they are really learned men; but only God and the Church are infallible.

To assert, then, that I have written in a passion or to follow the Jesuits, is to accuse me of a very great offence. In plain language, it means that I know the truth, but rather than abandon the Jesuits or my own pet opinion, I am obstinate in my defence of falsehood.

This charge I repel. I hold the opinion in question, because I consider it the one to be followed in conscience.

1 Remondini was also the editor of Father Patuzzi's works.

2 "Apologetic Rejoinder concerning the Use of the Equi-Probable Opinion."

I am convinced that that confessor is not acting with a good conscience who wishes to oblige a penitent in confession to follow the more safe opinion when there is question of opinions equally probable.

To such as are followers of the rigid opinion, I do not believe I could, without scruple of conscience, give faculties to hear confessions. This is the truth, and I confess it before God. For the rest, let my accusers say what they will.

I would ask you furthermore, if ever an opportunity presents itself, to have the Patriarch [1] read this last *Letter* [2] which has been printed at the end of the *Country Confessor.*

Once more I thank you for the many acts of kindness you have done me, for the affection you show me, and for the ardor with which you undertake my defence.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

[1] The Patriarch of Venice, Mgr. Giovanni Bragadino.

[2] He alludes to the "Apologetic Rejoinder concerning the Use of the Equi-Probable Opinion".

LETTER 125.

To the Same.

He informs him of the arrival of a package of books, and alludes to the difficulty of selling them at that season of the year. He recommends the printing of the new edition of the *Moral Theology*, and asks for the *Reply* of Father Patuzzi.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, May 7, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received your last letter, dated April 21, and at the same time information from Naples of the arrival of a package containing the works recently printed, among them the *Country Confessor*.

You may rest assured that I will attend to the sale of these books at the right time. I say: *at the right time;* for just now by reason of the very severe famine we have undergone in this part of the country, our people and clergy are so reduced that it would be out of the question to ask them to buy books.[1] We must wait till harvest-time.

I shall give to Father Ferrara the instructions you send me.

I am expecting to see you undertake, according to promise, the new edition of the *Moral*, as also that of the *Ascetical Writings* as soon as the works of Benedict XIV. are completed.

Do not forget to send me the folios of Father Patuzzi's *Reply* as soon as you print them.

Assuring you of my most profound respect, I am, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] Another word. Father Ferrara declares that

[1] The famine and plague ravaged Naples in 1764.

the price, seven lire ten grains, for the *Homo Apostolicus* is too high, for the simple reason that it is impossible to sell them in these parts for more than eight *carlini* apiece. On the other hand there is the expense of binding, and what is still greater, the shipping charges and custom tax, which have almost doubled on account of the quarantine. Deducting, then, four lire ten grains, the remainder is but a trifle. However, as I mentioned before, I shall tell Father Ferrara what you have written.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 126.

To the Same.

Sad results of the famine.—Recommendations relative to the printing of the *Moral*.—Favorable reception accorded to the *Apologetic Rejoinder* at Rome.

Live Jesus and Mary!

SANT' AGATA, May 21, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: Your last letter came to hand, along with one from Father Ferrara. He tells me that it will be impossible to sell the books until the harvest, so great is the distress caused throughout the kingdom by the famine of this year. I myself must wait till this pitiable condition of things is over, before I can recommend the *Homo Apostolicus* or the *Country Confessor* to my clergy. Two hundred thousand, I hear, have up to the present died of famine in the kingdom. I say, *up to the present*, for harvest-time is still one month off.

Father Ferrara writes, also, that the price of the *Country Confessor* is too high. When bound, it will cost thirty-

four grains,[1] he says, whereas no one will pay more than eighteen grains [2] for it, or, at most, two *carlini*.[3]

I am very much pleased to know that you will soon begin the new edition of my *Moral* enriched with all the additions. I learn, also, with satisfaction that the last edition is selling well. The new one will appear on that account so much the sooner. It will certainly be the last edition published in my life-time. I am, therefore, desirous that it should be a success in every respect, namely, that it be corrected by an able reviser and printed on good paper. Good paper, you know, makes the print clearer and renders the author's words more pleasing; whilst, on the other hand, if the paper is poor, the print also suffers and what the author says appears, even to himself, half stupid.

Please inform me as to the precise time that you intend to begin this new edition.[4] I shall then send you some short additions pertaining to points of importance. I have them all prepared. I do not send them to you now, but when the time comes I shall forward all the additions together; meantime, I shall collect other necessary emendations which may occur to me.

I am waiting to receive from you the folios of Father Patuzzi's *Reply* as soon as you print them.

Some days ago, I received information that my *Letter of Apology*, which has been inserted in the *Country Confessor*, had found its way into the hands of the Cardinals and even of the Pope. A friend of mine writing from Rome tells me that three Cardinals assured him that the Pope *enjoyed the work infinitely*. These are his own words.

I have commenced the perusal of the books of Father Patuzzi, that is, the Latin works you sent me. They are indeed very learned, but I see that in regard to the ques-

[1] 28 cents of our money. [2] 15 cents. [3] 17 cents.

[4] This edition, the sixth, which the saint thought so near at hand, appeared only in the year 1767.

tion about the *Probable Opinion* it will be a difficult thing for us to come to an agreement.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] Once again I would call to your mind my recommendation in regard to the size of the new edition of the *Moral*. Publish it in quarto as this will certainly meet with more approval. Moreover, it is but proper that, as this new edition is unquestionably better than all preceding ones, it should have a special form.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 127.

To the Same.

He sends some additions for the *Moral* and acknowledges the receipt of the copies of the *Country Confessor*. He complains that Remondini has added to the latter an unnecessary Latin dissertation which renders the sale of the book very difficult.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, June 3, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: I thought it necessary to send you some new additions which must be inserted in the coming edition of the *Moral*. Please see that they are carefully preserved along with the others. It would be well to insert them at once in their respective places.

Be sure to inform me of their receipt, for in case they do not reach you, I shall forward to you another copy of them which I have had made for that purpose.

Last week I received the bound copies of the *Country Confessor*. I am sorry that you have seen fit to add to it

he Latin *Dissertation* [1] which is altogether useless to the poorly instructed priests for whom this work is intended. It would have been more to the purpose to insert the Italian version. You could have printed a number of copies apart from the work, and have them sold separately. Demands for the latter have come to me from all sides, the *Dissertation* having been extolled even by some partisans of the Rigorist School, whom it has caused to change their opinion on the point in question.

To return to the work itself. There was no necessity for either the Latin or the Italian *Dissertation*, since at the very beginning of the first treatise, I took care to insert an abridgment of the entire *Dissertation*. That was certainly sufficient. Besides, this Latin version, which covers many pages, has increased the price of the book. I shall have difficulty in circulating it among my priests at the price you ask for it.

I do not want forty per cent, in fact I want nothing for selling these books. I am even willing to reimburse you for the expenses of freight and duty that you have been obliged to incur, and which this year have been twice as great as heretofore.

Of the copies I had printed at Naples, I have sold a few at the low price of seventeen grains [2] apiece. These contain, besides, the *Letter of Apology*. The highest price, therefore, at which I could sell your copies, binding included, would be two *carlini*.[3] Were we to demand more, we should run the risk of having the copies on our hands, for my priests are many and poor, and to them an outlay of two *carlini* is a considerable expense.

I shall endeavor to sell the work as best I can. What-

1 "Dissertatio de usu moderato opinionis probabilis.

2 About 14 cents.

3 About 17 cents.

ever accrues from the sale I shall forward to you, and, as I said, even reimburse the expense of transportation.

What I have just said, regards myself. As to Father Ferrara, I told you on a previous occasion that he declared he could not attempt to sell the book for the price you ask. He would either find no purchaser or would have to make up the deficit from his own pocket. I regret that things are in this condition, as the work, which would be of great usefulness to many country priests, will thus remain unsold. In this matter of the sale of the books, I would advise you to make some arrangement with Father Ferrara about the price, engaging him to sell them for the highest sum he can get. The Latin *Dissertation*, of which I spoke before, is more harmful than beneficial to the sale of the work. The priests who have need of the book, are not great friends of the Latin language, and, as soon as they see those pages, which are so much useless matter for them, they will refuse to buy it, especially when they find that they cannot get it at a reasonable price.

I have written thus at length for your good. Now you may do as you think best. Send some copies to Signor Stasi or some other bookseller of Naples, that the work may become known in the capital. You will be able to sell quite a number of copies there.

I know for a fact that "The Confessor in Hamlet and Village", the work of a Neapolitan priest, has had an immense sale; now mine surely surpasses it in abundance of doctrine and thoroughness. My book suffices for the country confessor, but this one does not.

I expect to hear shortly that you have begun work on the new edition of the *Moral*.

I am reading the Latin works of Father Patuzzi that you sent me; they are very beautiful.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 128.

To the Same.

He asks for the folios of Father Patuzzi's work as they issue from the press. He again alludes to the difficulty of selling the books.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, June 8, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have just received your last letter, dated May 26, and from it I learn that Father Patuzzi has sent you the original of the book he is writing against me.[1]

I request you to do me the favor of sending me by letter the printed sheets just as they come from the press. You need have no fear that the secret will be discovered, I shall take all necessary precaution.

I regret that your letters will arrive during the time of the

[1] This book was entitled: "The Cause of Probabilism discussed by Mgr. D. Alfonso de Liguori and once more Convicted of Falsity by Adelfo Dositeo, or, A Reply to the Short Dissertation on the Modera e Use of the Probable Opinion. Dedicated to His Grace, Mgr. Giuseppe Maria Saporiti, Archbishop of Genoa, Perpetual Abbot of S. Siro, etc., etc.—Ferrara, 1764.—Publisher, Remondini."

Pastoral Visitation, as I shall then be so occupied as hardly to have time to read the sheets.

Do not send the sheets singly, for the perusal of them at separate intervals would prevent me from drawing the right conclusion therefrom. Such a manner of reading them would serve only to confuse my mind. A better plan would be to send three, or, at least, two folios at a time. Despatch them to me at once, just as they issue from the press.

A word about the sale of the *Homo Apostolicus* and the *Country Confessor*. As far as I am concerned, I entreat you to leave me free to act as I think best. I have no desire to gain a single cent from the sale. All that I shall receive for the books, shall be forwarded to you, deduction being made for binding. But I repeat, for the present we must have patience and wait till September. My priests are not in a condition just now to think of buying books. The time to pay the tax *Pastor Bonus* [1] is come, and I cannot exact a thing from them. As regards the price, I shall sell the books as best I can.

As far as Father Ferrara is concerned, he says that it is impossible for him to sell the books at the price fixed by you. Please arrange matters with him yourself. He is now at a distance from me. I see him but rarely and we have very little correspondence with each other.

I am glad to hear that you intend to begin the *Moral Theology* as soon as you have finished the works of Benedict XIV.

Father Patuzzi starts out boldly from the very title of his

[1] An annual tax which had to be contributed toward the support of the episcopal *mensa*.

book. He begins to speak of falsity before he even introduces his subject.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 129.

To the Same.

He thanks the publisher for issuing the new edition of the *Moral* in quarto, and refers again to the sale and price of the books.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

[July, 1764.]

Most Illustrious Sir: I am answering your favor of the 9th of June, from a place in my diocese in which I am holding Visitation.

The new additions that I was to transmit before beginning the Visitation, have been sent to you. I hope you have received them by this time; but if, unfortunately, they have gone astray, let me know. I shall send them to you once more, as I have retained copies of them.

O what pleasure you have afforded me by giving me to understand that the new edition of the *Moral* will be issued in quarto! I had entertained misgivings as to your willingness to satisfy me on this point. You may rest assured that in this form the book will have a much larger sale, as everyone wanted to have it thus. Besides, this edition

will certainly be the last, as it is the best arranged and most complete.

With regard to the price of the books, I repeat once more, I do not desire to gain the least profit from those that I sell in my diocese, namely, the *Homo Apostolicus* and the *Guide for Country Confessors*. Whatever accrues from the sale, shall be forwarded to you after deducting expenses. We must, however, practise a little patience. My priests are so impoverished that they have not even paid what they owe me.

I cannot possibly sell the *Confessor* for more than two *carlini;* for the Latin *Dissertation* which accompanies it, will be, as I have already informed you, entirely useless to those priests who will buy the work. Nor can I sell the *Homo Apostolicus* for more than eight *carlini*. But enough. As far as I am concerned, I shall send you all that accrues from the sale.

I cannot say what Father Ferrara will do. The *Confessor* already comes to two *carlini*, counting the cost of binding and transportation; and if he sells the *Homo Apostolicus* for eight, I do not see what profit he will make. But I have said enough on this subject. Come to some agreement with him yourself concerning the price of these books, as, being at a distance, I never see him, and we correspond but rarely.

When the time comes, you will, I hope, let me know that you have begun work on the new edition of the *Moral*. I am anxiously awaiting this news.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] I am anxiously awaiting the sheets of Father Patuzzi's work. Send them as soon as possible.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 130.

To the Same.

Weakness of the arguments of Father Patuzzi against the *Dissertation* of the saint.—Injustice of a Dominican reviser.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

FRASSO, July 13, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received the printed sheets of the *Reply*, and I am extremely thankful to you for sending them. As they arrived only this morning, I have not yet finished reading them.

I have examined several observations of the author concerning the principal point of my *Dissertation*, and I find not one of them conclusive. I shall wait for the rest of the sheets to see if they contain anything more convincing.

Meanwhile, I understand that my *Dissertation* has won over to my way of thinking quite a number formerly of the contrary opinion. To speak of one in particular, I learned this very morning that the Abbot dell' Aquila of Monte Vergine, who at first held the opinion contrary to mine, has inserted a grand eulogy of my *Dissertation* and System, in the third volume of his "Dictionary of Theology", now being printed. Unfortunately, however, the reviser of the work happened to be a certain Dominican, who, forgetful of all justice, insisted that the whole paragraph in praise of my position should be omitted, because, forsooth, it is not in

conformity with the opinion maintained by the Dominicans.

It is clear, then, that these Reverend Fathers are acting through passion and not according to reason, for they will not permit a person to say what he thinks. But God is on the side of truth. If I defend the Jesuits, it is not because I have relatives among them or because I have been their pupil. No, I am defending what I believe before God to be the truth.

I am waiting with impatience for the folios.[1] Once more, I am very thankful to you for sending them to me. I shall not forget your kindness.

Send me word as soon as you receive the new additions for the *Moral*. I repeat again, if they should go astray, I shall forward a second copy, as I have retained the originals.

With regard to the *Guide for Country Confessors*, I do not at all regret, so far as I am concerned, that you added thereto the Latin *Dissertation*. I was speaking solely with a view to your interest, since this *Dissertation* has put you to some expense, and the priests for whom the work is intended, are not much in love with the Latin language. I will even go further, and say that there was no necessity for inserting the Italian *Dissertation* in the new edition, as I had placed a summary of it at the very beginning of the book. This summary will suffice for the priests for whom the work is intended. As regards the price, I declare again I shall forward to you whatever results from the sale. But we must have a little patience; for so much money left the kingdom during the famine that our people are in very straightened circumstances. The loss entailed will hardly be repaired for twenty years to come.

[1] Father Patuzzi's *Reply*.

I shall commend your interests, to the best of my power, to Father Ferrara.

Tendering you my most humble respects, I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] I am pleased that Father Patuzzi is writing against me. In this way the truth will be brought out the more clearly, and I desire nothing else.

Still a word. I have given another look at the *Reply* of Father Patuzzi, and I am very glad that he has written against me! I see that he does not in the least overthrow either my System or my propositions. Such a reply, therefore, will result in setting my System in a clearer light.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 131.

To the Same.

Anxiety of the saint to have the *Reply* of Father Patuzzi.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARPAIA, July 31, 1764.

I have received the new sheets of the *Reply*. Once more, thanks. I expect the others in a short time. I have nothing further to add, and remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] A friend of mine has charged me to ask you to forward the books designated on the enclosed slip. If you

can procure them, please send them to me, and let me know the price.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome,

LETTER 132.

To the Same.

He sends some additions for the *Moral*, and renews his request for the remaining pages of Father Patuzzi's *Reply*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARPAIA, August 14, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: I reply to your letter of the 14th of July, from which I learn that you have not received the additions. As they were only few, I did not think it worth while forwarding them through Signor Moschini, and I enclosed them in one of my letters. Besides, if what I am told be true, Signor Moschini has passed away to another life, a victim of the pest raging at Naples.

I am sending you the additions once more, and I beg you to have them inserted as soon as possible, in their respective places, that they may not be lost.

I was disappointed at not finding in your letter the remaining pages of Father Patuzzi's *Reply*, although you announced to me that they were enclosed. Your secretary must have made a mistake, and sealed the letter before enclosing them.

Please send me these pages as soon as possible. Thus far I have received two batches. I have, therefore, the entire collection down to the letter *P* inclusive. Folios *Q*

and the remaining are still wanting. I hope to receive them as soon as possible.

I am, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 133.

To the Same.

He again asks for the pages of Father Patuzzi's work, and proposes to Remondini to print a *Response* to the same.

Live Jesus and Mary!

ARIENZO, August 18, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: Last week I acknowledged the receipt of a letter from you which contained, you said, the rest of the folios; but, by a mistake of your secretary, the folios were not enclosed, though the letter was carefully sealed.

I hoped your secretary would this week rectify his mistake; but, to my great disappointment, I have received nothing, save the assurance that the sheets had been sent to me. I must, then, wait patiently another month for them. As likely as not, I shall receive the work of Father Patuzzi from the booksellers of Naples before these last pages, which I so anxiously desire, come to hand.

But enough on this subject. In case you have not received my last letter, I pray you, on the receipt of this to send me as quickly as possible the remaining folios from the letter *Q* inclusive.

I have already sketched my *Response* to Father Patuzzi, and I am waiting for these folios to complete it. I am ready to retract, should these last convince me of error, though it will be quite a difficult thing; for if Father Patuzzi had any arguments decisive enough to prove my error, he would have brought them forward, or, at least, hinted at them ere now.

I should like very much to know what class of people those were whom you mentioned in your letter, and who, after having read Father Patuzzi's work, were not very loud in approving it.

With regard to my *Response*, in case I resolve upon having it published, I shall not have it done at Naples, but at your establishment at Venice. If you wish to print it at your own expense, I shall be pleased; in that case, I shall pay for all the copies I need. If I publish it, I want to send it to many places, to Rome in particular, and especially to the Pope and Cardinals. I do not want you to present me with any copies. As I said before, all that I need I shall pay for.

If, however, you are unwilling to print the work at your own expense, do so at mine. I do not want a great number of copies, only a few complimentary ones for those I have just mentioned.

In case I publish this *Response*, I shall first have a few copies printed at Naples. I say *few*, nay, *very few*, for I have good reasons for not wishing to have this work published here. I shall, therefore, have it printed secretly and without the requisite approbations. But you will say: *Why this useless expense?* I answer: I must incur this expense, first of all, that I may be able to make the corrections to suit myself; for on the printed pages I correct not only expressions, but at times I change sentences and entire passages; a thing I cannot do on manuscript. In the second place, even if I were to make corrections on the

manuscript copy, I should be afraid to forward it to Venice and run the risk of losing it, as has happened to so many of the writings I sent you. But, if one printed copy goes astray, I can send another. Besides all this, my originals are entirely covered with marginal notes and erasures, as I am never contented, not even with myself. Now, with all these notes and erasures, your compositor would be very apt to commit many blunders, and upon me would devolve the task of correcting them.

I believe my *Response* will not require more than seven or eight folios, perhaps less.

Please let me have an answer in regard to the printing of this work which I shall in all probability give to the press. I shall then know how to act.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] In my last letter I sent a new copy of the few additions that had gone astray. Let me know whether you received it. I shall then send you the other writings.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 134.

To the Same.

He requests an answer to the preceding letter, and sends an addition for the *Moral*. He asks the publisher to procure some works of St. Thomas.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, September 19, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: I hoped by this time to have in my possession the remaining folios of Father Patuzzi's work,

for your secretary committed the mistake (to which I have called attention a number of times), of not enclosing them in the letter. I have not yet received them, nor have I had a letter from you for a long time.

I also wrote to you concerning the printing of my *Response* to the work of Father Patuzzi, and I requested you to inform me whether you would print it at your own expense or at mine. In the first case, I said, I would take several hundred copies, in proportion to the price, not indeed to sell, but to scatter in all directions. In the second case, I would tell you the exact number of copies I required. Please give me an answer as soon as possible, that I may know how to act. As I wrote to you before, I have very good reasons for not having this *Response* printed at Naples, but at Venice.

I send you the enclosed addition which should be inserted at the beginning of the large *Moral*, namely, in the first chapter of my treatise (not that of Busenbaum) *De Conscientia*, at the 3d point, *De Conscientia probabili*, after number 32, in the place indicated in the accompanying sheet; I have marked everything carefully on this slip.

I am, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] A word more. In one of the houses of our Congregation we have the works of St. Thomas designated in the accompanying note. My companions desire you to procure for them the other works of St. Thomas of which no mention is therein made.

[*Enclosed note, written in another hand.*]

J. M. J. T.

Of the works of St. Thomas, published at Venice, 1745, by Giovanni Bettinelli, we have the following seventeen volumes.

1. Commentaries on the Holy Scripture.
2. Commentaries on the Books of Sentences.
3. Other Short Commentaries.
4. *De Potentia.*
5. *De Malo.*
6. Two volumes *De Virtutibus*, *De Veritate* and *De Quodlibeto.* In all, 17 volumes in regular succession. The rest of the works of the holy Doctor are wanting.
7. Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul.
8. The *Catena Aurea.*

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 135.

To the Same.

He again refers to the printing of his *Apology*, or *Response* to Father Patuzzi.

ARIENZO, September 23, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: Thanks be to God, I have at last received the remaining folios of Father Patuzzi's book. I have waited for them long and anxiously. I thank you once more for your kindness.

With regard to the printing of the *Apology*[1] which I am

[1] We have seen before how Father Patuzzi, under the pseudonym of Adelfo Dositeo, had attacked the "Short Dissertation on the Moderate Use of the Probable Opinion" in a work entitled: "The

composing in defence of my *Dissertation*, do not imagine that my commission to you for its publication is a divided contract. No, you alone are to do all the printing.

As I wrote you from the very beginning, I have had printed, or rather I am having printed a few copies of this *Apology*, so as to be able to correct the work as I usually do, since on the printed sheet I change, add, and expunge many things. In fact, up to the present I have corrected three successive prints of these few pages, and some I shall have to revise a fourth time. But, as I mentioned to you, I have had this printing done secretly, for I do not care to have anything to do with the revisers here at Naples. I had a warm controversy with them over my book, the *Guide for Country Confessors*, and I have no desire to renew communications with them.

I want to know which you would prefer: to publish at your own expense this *Apology* of mine, which will be quite short, six or at most seven folios being required, in which case I should purchase all the copies I need, not to sell, but to give away as presents; or would you rather do it on my account? If so, I shall tell you how many copies to print. I pray you, let me know which plan suits you better.

Last week I sent you a letter containing a note to be added to the *Moral*. This edition of the work will certainly be the last.

I expect to hear very soon that you have begun work on this last edition, which will, I trust, be received with univer-

Cause of Probabilism, etc." The *Response* of the saint appeared under the title: "Apology of His Lordship Mgr. D. Alfonso de Liguori, Bishop of Sant' Agata de' Goti, or a Defence of the Dissertation, etc. against the Attacks of a Very Rev. F. Lector, who styles himself Adelfo Dositeo."

sal favor. What a satisfaction for the public to learn that it will be issued in quarto!

I am now selling, though slowly, the *Guide for the Confessor*.[1] When I have collected a respectable sum, I shall forward it to you.

I have learned of the forwarding of the eight *Cistercian Offices*, and their price. As soon as the books arrive, I shall have the bill collected at the monastery that has charged me to procure them. I have already indicated to them the price, twenty-four lire.

I have nothing else to add.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 136.

To the Same.

Care taken by the saint with regard to his *Apology*—His opinion of this work.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, September 28, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: During the past week I received your letter and with it the remaining folios of Father Patuzzi's book. Once more, I thank you.

I had an idea that, perhaps, this last part of the work would contain the decisive arguments of Father Patuzzi, but I have discovered therein nothing that would necessitate

[1] The "Guide for Country Confessors".

the addition of the least thing to the *Response* I have composed, I mean the *Apology* for my *Dissertation.*

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the very kind letter you have written. I pray you, do not entertain a thought of making me a present of the copies of my *Apology* that I may need; for I shall require several hundred, and I am unwilling to have you bear the expense. You have already given me sufficient proofs of your regard.

I did incur the additional expense of having the original printed at Naples, but I was forced to do so, on account of the innumerable additions and changes that I had to make on the printed page. All this work had to be accomplished during the course of my Episcopal Visitation, and I was obliged to lay the work aside and resume it at every moment.

My aim was to bring the work to perfection, to make it as complete as possible. Had I not accomplished this, I should still be engaged on it. I think, however, no further addition or emendation is required.

I have given the work to a number of persons to read, and they are all immensely pleased with it. This *Apology* sets my System in a clear light, much better than does my *Dissertation*, since it exposes the weakness of the objections brought forward by Father Patuzzi.

Next week most probably, or, at least, the following, I shall receive the sheets already printed. As I receive them, I shall forward a batch to you enclosed in a letter, with the margins cut away, just as you sent me the folios of Father Patuzzi's book. The latter amounted to about seventeen folios; mine will scarcely reach six or seven, perhaps a little more. I should be very much pleased if you would employ for this work the same type as that used for Father Patuzzi's, which is, indeed, beautiful, quite large and neat. As regards the paper, let it be white. Good

paper, you know, shows off the type to advantage and even enhances the matter treated.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

[*The signature of the saint is wanting.*]

[*P. S.*] I have learned that but two copies of Father Patuzzi's book have thus far arrived at Naples, one addressed to the Cardinal, the other to Count Grossi, of Turin. However, when my *Apology* makes its appearance, Father Patuzzi's work will have a larger sale, for everyone will be desirous of reading both sides of the question.

As you have not yet commenced the printing of the *Moral*, I send you the accompanying addition, destined for the first volume.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 137.

To the Same.

Recommendations relative to the printing of the *Apology*. — Importance of a good revision, good type, and good paper.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, October 31, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: A fortnight ago I sent you the other five folios of my *Response* to Father Patuzzi. I trust you have received them. Should they, however, have gone astray, as did those of the *Country Confessor*, it matters little, as I possess copies of them. I have copies, also, of the small additions I inserted in the work. You need only inform me that you have not received those sent, and I shall forward to you a second set. I have delayed a week longer in sending these remaining sheets to

you, for the simple reason that I could not get them any sooner.

With these latter, I am sending also the *Advice to the Reader*, and the little index of paragraphs, both to be placed at the beginning of the book. The title-page I already sent you with the first folios.

Please instruct the compositor to print this little index only after all the other pages are finished. He will then be able to indicate the number of the pages to which the respective paragraphs belong. See, also, that he takes care to insert at the top of each page the running-titles marked on my manuscript.

Again I beg you to confide the correction of the work to some one of experience and ability. You might intrust it to the same one that revised Father Patuzzi's book, for that is sufficiently well corrected. I recommend, if you think best, to have it printed in the same type as that used for the above-mentioned work. It is beautiful. Let the paper, also, be the same. Bad type and poor paper depreciate even the subject-matter of a book. Press forward the work as much as possible. Father Patuzzi's volume is in circulation, and everyone is curious to see my *Response*. Requests for it are being continually made to me. My reply is that we must wait till it comes from Venice, for I will have nothing to do with Naples.

I hope to hear soon that you have begun the reprinting of the *Moral*. I send you for this work the accompanying little addition. It may be that I sent it before; but as I do not remember having done so, I send it now, as it treats of an important matter. Have it attached to the place designated on the slip, as you have done, I trust, with all the other additions. Unless this is done and the compositor has before his eyes the additions arranged in their respective places, it will be impossible for him to remember where they belong.

Tell the compositor to be sure to insert in my *Response* to Father Patuzzi all the little slips that accompany it. Should any of these be lost on the way, I have, as I told you, preserved copies of them.

Tell him, also, that in the folios I am sending, there is at page 156, folio *G*, a long addition printed apart, which belongs at the end of the period that terminates about the middle of the page, after the words *dalla legge*. This addition commences: *Dicono che i Dottori antichi, etc.* He will find it after page 156 with the place to which it belongs distinctly marked.

The last folio contains another printed addition. Its place is at the end of the last page, which begins: *Aggiungo.* With this slip the work finishes, so place it after it: *Fine.*

I had two letters from you lately, from which I learn that you have not yet received the first five folios. I once more beg you to send me word as soon as you get them.

I renew my request to you to caution the reviser to be very careful to compare the printed copy with the originals. They have cost me considerable trouble, as I corrected them thoroughly even in regard to punctuation.

You will not, I trust, delay to commence work on the *Moral.* We are all waiting for this new edition, which, I hope, you will soon begin, also, the complete edition of my ascetical writings. They, too, are eagerly looked for. Many are asking me about them.

In case you have not yet printed the folios of the *Apology*, be kind enough to add the few words contained on the enclosed slip. They belong on page 85, fourth folio *D.* But if these folios are already printed, do not put yourself to any trouble. The matter is not of much importance.

I am sending, also, the *Advice to the Reader*, and a small index to be placed at the beginning of the

book. The title-page I forwarded to you with the first folio.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 138.

To the Same.

He inquires about some folios sent to the publisher, and asks him to procure the supplement of a work printed at Naples.

Live Jesus and Mary!

SANT' AGATA, November 10, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: Last week I forwarded to you all the remaining folios of my *Response* to Father Patuzzi. The first sheets were sent two weeks before. I beg you to let me know immediately if you have not received them on receipt of this letter, and I shall send you a copy of the entire work, revised and containing the same additions as the first.

I read in the *Bibliotheca* of Father Ferraris, reprinted a short time ago, in 1763, at Venice, by Signor Storti, that the critical, moral, and juridical notes, together with their answers have been printed in a separate volume. We have purchased the Roman edition of this work. I should like to have the supplement in question. Be so kind as to pro-

cure the same, and send it to me as soon as possible. Inform me, also, of the price.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 139.

To the Same.

Modification to be introduced into the title of the *Apolgy*. —Various recommendations.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, November 14, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: A doubt which occurs to me with regard to my *Response* to Father Patuzzi necessitates my writing to you so soon again.

In the *Response* printed at Naples, I had at first mentioned the name of Patuzzi; but finding that, in the title of his book, he conceals his name and styles himself Adelfo Dositeo, I was obliged to change Patuzzi into *Father Lector* wherever the name of Patuzzi occurred.

But now I am in doubt whether I changed the original title-page. Formerly it read: *Apology . . . . against the Objections of the Very Rev. F. Lector, Fra Giov. Vincenzo Patuzzi, of the Ven. Order of Preachers.* This title must now be changed, so as to read: *against the Objections of a Very Rev. F. Lector, who styles himself Adelfo Dositeo.*

I have written this to you that, in case the title-page has remained unaltered, you may have it changed in the manner here indicated.

I take this opportunity to inform you again that I sent you the last folios of my *Response* a fortnight ago. My purpose in mentioning this is that, should these sheets have gone astray, as on a former occasion, you may let me know at once. I can forward to you a second copy with the same corrections and additions, as I have preserved copies of them.

I expect to hear soon that you have begun the reprinting of the *Moral*, to be followed by that of the ascetical writings, a collection much sought after, but which has been long lying on the shelf.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 140.

To the Same.

Fearing that his *Apology* may be forbidden at Naples, he suggests to the publisher a mode of forwarding two hundred copies.

Live Jesus and Mary!

SANT' AGATA, November 30, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: By this date, I trust, you have received the last folios of the *Response*. But I warn you in advance that the Very Rev. Dominican Fathers are using every endeavor with the government to prevent its appearance. If I mistake not, they are thinking of having its

entrance into the kingdom prohibited on its arrival from Venice. We must, therefore, use precaution. Do not send more than two hundred copies at first. Others can easily follow.

When shipping the books, instruct the master of the bark or Signor D. Matteo Ernandez, of Manfredonia, to put aside the packet containing the two hundred copies, and on arrival at Manfredonia, to forward them, not to the custom-house of Naples, but to Don Scipione Sabatelli, the parish priest of the castle of Manfredonia, with whom I am acquainted. I shall see that they are thence delivered to me, without any wrangling with the custom-house of Naples.

I thought also of having the folios of my *Response* hidden between the leaves of some other work which you might be sending to Naples. But the more secure plan is to address the packet to the priest Sabatelli. I shall warn him in time to deliver it to me as soon as he gets it.

What can we do? In the unfortunate times in which we live, a person is forbidden even to defend himself. To what a miserable condition we are reduced! Father Patuzzi was allowed to write against me, to overwhelm me with abuse, and I am not permitted even to defend my arguments.

I have judged proper to notify you of all this that you may know how to act.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 141.

To the Same.

He renews his recommendations with regard to the transmission of the *Apology*, and urges the publisher to circulate a good number of copies outside the kingdom of Naples.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, December 21, 1764.

Most Illustrious Sir: For some weeks I received no letters, then three came at once. The bad weather is probably the cause of the delay.

You have, I see, received all the folios and commenced the printing. I am much pleased and offer you my thanks. I was especially pleased to hear that the revision of the sheets had been performed by a disciple of the very learned Mgr. Mansi,[1] and, therefore, a learned man himself.

With regard to the sending of my *Response* to Naples when the printing is finished, I have already mentioned to you the state of affairs, and I repeat it again: The Dominican Fathers have had the public printing of this *Response* interdicted at Naples. On the other hand, the government has once more published in the capital the decree which forbids the sending of works for printing outside of the kingdom without permission.

Such being the condition of affairs, there can be no question of forwarding my *Response* by the usual way, namely, by the custom-house of Naples. You must send all the copies to Manfredonia in a box apart from the rest, and charge Signor D. Matteo Ernandez to consign it to Don Scipione Sabatelli, parish priest and chaplain of the castle of Manfredonia. The latter has been forewarned by me. He knows where to transmit these copies without their hav-

[1] Archbishop of Lucca.

ing to pass through the custom-house of Naples, in which they would, very likely, be detained.

You might even, without writing to Ernandez, confide to the master of the bark the carrying of the box to the said parish priest of the castle.

I am waiting for the books of St. Thomas, also for the supplement volume of Father Ferraris.[1]

You would do well to send copies of my *Response* to Sicily, where this work is expected with impatience.

You have frequently anounced that the enlarged *Moral* was soon to be put in press, but I have not yet had the pleasure of learning that this has really taken place. It is certain that between this last reprint, enriched as it is with the emendations I have mentioned, and the preceding editions, there is as great a difference as that between heaven and earth.

I send you ten ducats, the sum total accruing from the sale of some copies of the *Country Confessor*. I am busy every day trying to sell the rest.

I have not yet been able to commence the sale of the *Homo Apostolicus*. I am waiting till new students begin the course of Moral in my seminary, as the old ones had purchased the Italian *Instruction*.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

[1] Mention has been made of these books in the letters of the 19th of September and the 10th of November of this year.

LETTER 142.

To the Same.

A correction to be made in the *Apology*.—Eagerness of the public for this work.—Mode of introducing the same into Naples.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA [January] 10, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: Yesterday I received your letter of the 22d of December, after watching a number of couriers pass without bringing me any news from you. I regret that you have not yet received a letter of mine in which I spoke of a correction to be introduced into the *Response* to Father Patuzzi.

Cast a glance at page 182, toward the close of my *Response*, and at the end of § iv.: you must there change the heading of the letter which his Eminence Cardinal Galli wrote to me. It is couched in these terms: *Illustriss. e Reverendiss. Signore e Pne colendissimo.* This should be changed, and, instead, read simply: *Illustriss. e Reverendiss. Signore*, nothing more. You must make this correction by all means, else the work will produce a very bad effect at Rome.[1]

At Naples they have not yet published the *Reply* of Father Patuzzi, though I know for certain that it has been printed.

I beg you to scatter my *Response* in every direction. My adversaries would perhaps, prefer, not to have it appear at all. I know that it is everywhere in demand,

[1] Father Patuzzi had accused St. Alphonsus of following a doctrine condemned by the Sacred Congregation of the Roman Inquisition, and by Pope Clement XIII. in person. The holy Doctor wrote at once to the Grand Penitentiary, Cardinal Galli, who declared the falseness of the accusation in the letter just alluded to by the saint, and which was published by the latter with a change of title.

requests for it having come to me even from Lucca. But what can I do? They have tied my hands. Once more, then, please scatter it in all directions, and especially in Rome, Sicily, and Lucca.

I am now expecting the two hundred copies from Manfredonia, through Don Scipione Sabatelli, parish priest of the castle of Manfredonia. You have, no doubt, sent them to him according to request.

I should think you could easily secure an entry into Naples for the *Response*, by sending it to some bookseller, such as Don Domenico Terres, or any other of your correspondents. You would, however, have to conceal the folios in some other work, acting for that purpose in concert with the bookseller. You may act in this as prudence dictates. But do not confide the matter to Stasi, for he is one with the religious who have had the *Reply* of Father Patuzzi published at Naples.

I hope to send you, next week, a new and very useful addition for the *Moral*. But, I repeat, let me soon have the satisfaction of hearing that the reprinting has been begun. Many are waiting for the work, and I have even received requests for it from Lucca.

Offering you my very humble respects, I am, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] I have a number of little works on hand, not one of them finished. I need time and health to complete them. My episcopal charge and my infirmities do not permit the task. I have now been confined to my bed twenty days. God's will be done!

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 143.

To the Same.

He forwards an addition for the *Moral*, and requests the publisher to send a number of copies of the *Apology* to Rome. —His hopes with regard to the success of this work.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA DE' GOTI, [January] 24, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: In my last I wrote that I would send you, the following week, an addition for the *Moral*. Sickness, however, prevented me from forwarding it so soon. I send it to-day, and I beg you to preserve it carefully, as it has cost me fifteen days of labor. The subject-matter is very important and useful, especially at the present day.

I am waiting for word that the printing of the *Response* to Patuzzi is finished. In your last letter you wrote that the work was nearing completion. When it is completed, I beg you to send quite a number of copies to Rome, where its appearance, I am told, is eagerly awaited. I say, *send quite a number*, for I cannot do it myself without difficulty, on account of the prohibition issued by the government at the instigation of the Dominican Fathers, as I have already mentioned.

I expect to receive the two hundred copies, when completed, by way of Manfredonia. Let me remind you that they should be consigned to Don Scipione Sabatelli, parish priest of the castle.

I hope that the more the Dominicans labor to suppress my *Response*, the more the public will demand it and read it.

In conclusion, I would call to your mind that it is time to begin the printing of the *Moral.*

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] I have received good news from Naples. In all probability I shall obtain the royal approbation for my *Response* to Patuzzi.

However, as soon as you have a chance to send by the bark, forward to Manfredonia the two hundred copies agreed upon. When I receive the approbation, I shall send you word.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 144.

To the Same.

He thanks the publisher for printing the *Apology*, and begs him by all means to make the correction mentioned in a preceding letter.—He hopes to obtain the royal approbation for this work.

Live Jesus and Mary!

SANT' AGATA, [January] 31, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: I thank the Lord, and I am indebted for it to your kindness also, that my *Apology* will see the light of day despite my opponents, who have left nothing undone to hinder the publication of this little work.

I learn, therefore, with pleasure that the printing is finished, though I regret very much that you did not receive in time the letter begging you to correct a very

considerable error which I remarked only after having forwarded the original to you.

The error is found toward the end of § iv., in the title of the letter written to me by his Eminence Cardinal Galli, Grand Penitentiary. This was printed: *Illustriss. e Reverendiss. Sign. Sign. e Padr. colmo;* whereas it should read simply: *Illustriss. e Reverendiss. Signore,* and nothing more, as this is the only title the Cardinals give to bishops. I asked you, in case the title was printed in the first form, by all means to change the page. To publish so pompous an address would produce a very bad impression, especially in Rome. Cardinal Galli would certainly take offence, since he would be held up as betraying ignorance in giving me a title to which I have no right. Please, then, do not fail to change this page before you give the *Apology* to the public.

With regard to the two hundred copies, I understand you to say that at Manfredonia, Signor D. Matteo Ernandez will see that they be conveyed to the parish priest of the castle, Don Scipione Sabatelli. I shall write about this arrangement to Signor D. Matteo, also.

The works of St. Thomas together with the Ferraris have not yet come, and, in fact, I have so far received no word that they have arrived at Manfredonia. Perhaps the vessel has been delayed by the bad weather we have had lately.

I shall do my best to sell the rest of the *Country Confessors.* As for the *Homo Apostolicus*, I am waiting till the seminarians begin their new course of Moral, the older students having provided themselves with the Italian *Instruction.*

I am waiting with impatience for you to finish those pressing works to which you alluded. You can then begin reprinting the *Moral.*

I am making every possible effort to get the royal appro-

bation for the *Apology*. Once that it is obtained, you may freely send copies to Naples. I hope to succeed soon.

I am, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] I asked you before, and I now renew my request, to forward to me two more supplementary volumes of Father Ferrari's *Bibliotheca*, similar to those you have sent.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 145.

To the Same.

He sends to the publisher his *Dedication to the Sovereign Pontiff*, and requests him to insert it at the beginning of the *Apology*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, February 7, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: If I mistake not, my *Apology* has not yet made its appearance, or, at any rate, but few copies of it have been sold. I have, therefore, in accordance with the advice of persons of excellent judgment, thought it well to dedicate this *Apology* to the Pope. My opponents cannot think of anything further to decry and nullify my work; but God knows well how to uphold the truth.

I send you, then, this short *Dedication*[1] to the Pope, every word of which I have carefully weighed. I have

1 This "Dedication" reached Remondini only after numerous copies of the "Apology" had been sold, a fact which explains why we rarely find it prefixed to this work. When, however, the saint united in one volume, entitled: "On the Moderate Use of

revised it three or four times, that the gentlemen who are opposing me may find in it no matter for derision.

I earnestly entreat you to print it as soon as possible, and insert it at the beginning of the book.

Most Illustrious Sir,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 146.

To the Sovereign Pontiff Clement XIII.

He dedicates to the Pope a writing in defence of his System on Probabilism, declaring the end he had in view in publishing the work.

[SANT' AGATA, 1765.]

Most Holy Father: When I published to the world, three years ago, a *Dissertation on the Moderate Use of the Probable Opinion*, I was influenced by the same motive as that which led the bishop of S. Ponts to make the following considerations in his celebrated "Letter to the Bishop of Soissons: *The teachers of a lax system of Moral have disappeared, but in their stead have arisen new teachers whose doctrines are much more intolerable, as they drive souls to desparation. Their doctrine can, indeed, have no other effect than to introduce corruption of manners. The number of persons who ascribe their wicked conduct to the*

the Probable Opinion", all the arguments he had adduced on various occasions in support of his System and in refutation of his adversaries, he inserted the "Dedication" in question at the beginning of the new book.

pernicious rigorism at present holding supreme sway in Moral, is far greater than the number of those who have pretended to bring forward the authority of the lax system as an excuse for their evil ways. The aim of my *Dissertation* is to deliver many souls from the yoke which these same teachers wish to impose on them, to the great danger of their eternal welfare. Indeed, to believe certain modern writers, we could not, without grievous sin, follow any opinion in favor of liberty, unless we know it to be morally certain, and that for all human acts. Now, in my *Dissertation*, I believed I had clearly proved the truth of the opinion I maintained, confirmed, as it was, by the authority of theologians, and especially by that of the Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas. Such, also, was the conviction of those learned men who had attentively and impartially perused the work.

As this work has, nevertheless, been bitterly attacked by a religious, a lector in theology, under the pseudonym of Adelfo Dositeo, I thought it necessary for me to answer, and I believe the present *Response* will throw more light on the point in controversy, showing forth, as it does, the weakness of my opponent's objections.

I protest, moreover, that in all I have written on this subject, I have never had, nor have I now any other purpose than to discover the truth in the matter under dispute, on which truth depends the good or the evil direction of the conscience of all the faithful.

Some years ago I had the honor of dedicating my *Moral Theology* to the Sovereign Pontiff Benedict XIV., Your predecessor. I now take the liberty of placing at the feet of Your Holiness this new work of mine, and I offer it to You as an appendix to the said *Theology*, to the end that You may deign to cast a glance at it, and correct, modify, or eliminate whatever You may perhaps discover in it not

conformable to the maxims of the Gospel and the rules of Christian prudence.

I beseech the Lord that he grant to Your Holiness length of days for the good of the whole Christian world.

After the *Dedication* inserted at the beginning of the *Apology*, printed at Venice, 1764.

LETTER 147.

To Signor Giambattista Remondini.

He once more recommends the publisher to correct an error in the *Apology*, and sends him the *Dedication* for the same work. He urges him to hasten the printing of the *Moral* and the ascetical collection.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

February 19, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: Thanks be to God, my health is now good, though not yet perfect, the weather having been very inclement.

The insertion of the title *Padrone Colendiss.* in the letter of Cardinal Galli would appear, it is true, a mistake of little import, but it would make a great sensation in Rome where they are very punctilious in the matter of titles. What causes me more apprehension is the fact, that Cardinal Galli, the author of the letter, might be very much displeased, as it would make him pass for a person ignorant of even the customary title of bishops. The whole letter, too, is written in the Cardinal's own hand. Now, then, my dear Sir, if you could alter that page, you would free me from the great anxiety which has long tormented me on account of that error.

I shall send you the additions for the *Moral* later on. I have to note down a new point in addition to the three

important ones already recorded. I am, however, in no hurry to forward these short additions, though they are valuable, for I perceive from your letter that they are not to be printed immediately. I am afraid the work will be long deferred.

It may be that I shall descend to the tomb before seeing either this reprint of the *Moral* or the publication of my ascetical writings. You will, then, not take it ill, I trust (pardon me for saying it), if I shall soon have the ascetical collection printed at Naples. They are called for from every quarter, and I am thinking of having them printed at once, that I may see them in the hands of the public before my death. If I do not take some such steps, I feel I shall never behold the new edition.

I am sorry that things are going so slowly in regard to the *Moral*, also.

I send you enclosed the *Dedication* to the Pope of my *Apology*. Please, be so kind as to print it and prefix it to the work. Even should you have already sold some copies of the book, it does not matter; it will suffice if you insert the *Dedication* in those yet on hand. If any copies come to me without it, I shall have it printed here, and put it where it belongs.

I am glad to know that you intend sending the *Apology* to many of your friends at Naples, who will certainly dispose of it. I hope to obtain before long the express permission of the king, as has been promised. Then all difficulties will disappear.

The *Reply* of Patuzzi, printed at Naples, has made its appearance, but I understand it is having small sale.

The works of St. Thomas and those of Ferraris have not yet arrived, owing, no doubt, to the bad weather. All the booksellers have been four months waiting for books printed

at Venice, and which have not yet been received. Do not forget to send me two more copies of the supplement of Father Ferraris.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] I have already sent you a copy of the *Dedication;* but I enclose another in case the preceding one should go astray.

After the original preserved in the municipal library of Bassano (Venice).

LETTER 148.

To the Same.

Plan for disposing of the copies of the *Apology*.—The saint hopes soon to obtain the royal approbation of his work. He alludes to an addition intended for the *Moral*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, March 15, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received your very esteemed letter, from which I learn that the two hundred copies of my *Apology* will soon arrive at Manfredonia. Please accept my thanks.

In regard to the price, I shall attend to that myself, and see that the copies are sold. I shall take a large number myself to send to Rome and elsewhere. I cannot risk introducing them into Naples, as I have not yet received the royal rescript, although I have obtained the approbation of the censor. I hope, however, to obtain the rescript also, as soon as the Grand Almoner returns from abroad.

I have not yet been able to send the short *Dissertation* on *Invincible Ignorance*, which has to be added to the

Moral.[1] It is now being translated into Latin (I had composed it in Italian), and after that it must be copied.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 149.

To the Same.

After some information about his health, the saint expresses his joy at the news of the immediate printing of the *Moral* and the ascetical works. He mentions, also, his plan for answering the new *Reply* of Father Patuzzi, thanks the publisher for his labors on the *Apology*, and concludes with an allusion to the new addition for the *Moral*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, April 3, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received your last kind and obliging letter.

Your first question was about my health. I answer that a short while ago I passed through a very grave crisis brought on by chest trouble. If a violent fever had not relieved me of an excess of long-standing humors accumulated in the chest, I should very likely be at this moment in another world. Thanks be to God, however, I was enabled to throw off that incubus of bad humors. I am now free from fever and out of bed, though still very weak.

I am deeply grateful to you for your intention to begin work without delay on the new *Moral*, and after that, I

[1] *Dissertatio in qua ostenditur, dari ignorantiam invincibilem in nonnullis ad legem naturalem spectantibus*, added to the sixth edition (1767) lib. i. n. 170 et seq.

hope, on the ascetical collection. I wrote to you that, in case I saw any more delay with regard to the printing of these two works, I would have it done at Naples. I wrote thus, because I behold infirmities attacking me day by day, hurrying me to the tomb, and I should like to see these works printed before my death, with all the improvements I have been able to make in them. In all this I am seeking the glory of God, not my own. I trust that in everything I have ever written, my sole intention has been to promote that glory.

I am not at all displeased, in fact I am glad, that Father Patuzzi has issued a new *Reply*. I trust that the truth of my teaching will be made more evident by it.

I conjure you to procure the folios of this work, and transmit them to me by post as soon as possible; for, though I declared in my *Response* that I would write no answer to further attacks (and, in truth, I shall not compose a special reply to this latest work), still I am thinking of uniting in one volume my *Dissertation* and the *Response*, though in a different order. I shall make use of this occasion to introduce whatever I ought to say in answer to the latest objections of Father Patuzzi.

It is astonishing that he saw fit to reply to me so promptly when he should have made greater haste to refute a more voluminous work composed against him by Don Bartolomeo Corrado on the Bull *Unigenitus*, and in which he is treated as a heretic. But enough on this point. I hope you will do me the favor to send the folios in question.

I am thankful to you also for having inserted the *Dedication* at the beginning of my *Apology*. I am waiting for the fifty copies by post, and the others soon after, when I shall receive the packet from Manfredonia.

I have learned to my great consolation, that you have changed the title of the letter written by Cardinal Galli.

I have not yet obtained the royal rescript authorizing the free circulation of my *Apology* in Naples. But I expect it without fail after Easter, the censor whom they assigned to my work, having given me a very flattering approbation. I have outlived the storm.

It is surprising that I have received no news from Naples or Manfredonia, of the *Works* of St. Thomas and the *Compendium* of Ferraris.

I cannot yet forward to you the short *Dissertation* on *Invincible Ignorance*, which everybody will be pleased to see, as the copying is not yet finished. I hope to send it during the coming week. I cannot transmit it by post, as it is too bulky for a letter, and the copyist has written it in large characters. I shall forward it to you through Signor Moschini or else through Signor Agazzi, your Roman correspondent. I shall see which route is the more expeditious. At any rate, you might, as I mentioned to you before, safely commence the reprinting of the *Moral*, as the writing in question belongs only on page 43, n. 169. There are fifty-four folios to print before coming to this *Dissertation*.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 150.

To the Same.

He announces to the publisher that the introduction of the *Apology* into Naples is authorized.—Weakness of Father Patuzzi's new *Reply*.—Impatience with which the *Apology* is awaited in Sicily, Rome, and Lucca.

Live Jesus and Mary!

SANT' AGATA, April 15, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: Thanks be to God, I have obtained the royal approbation. I was, indeed, very much afraid of never getting it. You can, therefore, send copies of my *Apology* to Naples.

I mentioned to you in my last letter that I had received the *Works* of St. Thomas and the *Compendium* of Ferraris, but that I had mislaid your letter notifying me of the price of these volumes. Please inform me again, since it will be convenient for me to pay it out of my own pocket. Tell me, also, how many volumes the packet contained, as I have already sent them to those who had applied for them. Lastly, let me know the price of the *Compendium* of Ferraris.

The copies of the *Apology* have not yet come to hand; up to the present, I know not whether they have arrived.

I have been waiting, also, for the fifty copies of the *Dedication*. So far I have not received them. I pray you to send me fifty others by post, for God alone knows when they would reach me by sea.

I have received the first folio of the latest *Reply* of our friend, but I have been unable to discover anything important in it.[1] It is all talk. I am waiting to see what he will have to say when he comes to treat of his own theological teaching, which he is now opposing to mine. It is

[1] The new *Reply* of Father Patuzzi.

my belief that it is all his own invention, since all authors teach the contrary.

The short *Dissertation* on *Invincible Ignorance*, which belongs to the new *Moral*, I have forwarded to Signor Giannantonio Moschini, who has promised to see that it reaches you.

Apropos of this subject, please give me the consolation of speedily hearing that you have commenced the reprinting of the *Moral*, as there is a great demand here in Naples for the work.

I have learned with pleasure that you are reprinting the *True Spouse of Christ*. The edition here at Naples is exhausted.

Patuzzi asserts in the very first pages of his new work that the readers of his first *Reply* have, without a single exception, declared it invincible; but I have heard others pronounce it just the contrary. Please inform me, if you know, whether it is true that his *Reply* is looked upon as irrefutable, and my *Apology* feeble.

I am, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] Do not fail, I beseech you, to send a good number of copies of my *Apology* to Sicily, for I understand that many there are very anxious to get it after the noise caused by Patuzzi's *Reply*. When my *Apologies* arrive, the excitement will certainly cease.

I hear that they are very much in demand at Rome and Lucca. Please send a number to these two places.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 151.

To Father Eusebius Amort, Canon Regular of the Lateran.[1]

He urges him to combat the teaching of Father Patuzzi.

SANT' AGATA DE' GOTI, April 23, 1765.

Very Reverend Father: With great pleasure I have seen clearly demonstrated in your *Theology*, and proved by arguments and authorities, that it is allowed to follow opinions equally probable or nearly so, but not such as are notably less probable. I have myself published a *Dissertation* in defence of this teaching.

But this new *Dissertation* has been assailed by the Rev. Father Lector Joannes Vincentius Patuzzi, who, in a work entitled "Regula proxima humanarum actionum", flattered himself that he had clearly proved the truth of his Rigid System, that a person is not permitted to embrace any other opinions than those reputed morally certain. After the perusal of my work, in which I cited you as my master, he made me the subject of a very violent attack. Nothing daunted, I responded to his objections, which have been the means of bringing our teaching into clearer light.

But what joy would it not afford me, Very Reverend Father, were you to take up your pen once more to defend what you have so ably written, and thus not leave me alone to combat Patuzzi in defence of our common teaching! Very many are nowadays embracing the System of Patuzzi and Concina. This System leads souls to eternal destruction, since it charges their conscience with an intolerable burden, obliging them to observe all the precepts

[1] Father Eusebius Amort was born in Bavaria, in 1692, and entered among the Canons Regular of the Lateran in the monastery of Pollingen. He was the author of various works, all replete with learning, which drew from St. Alphonsus the highest praise. The holy Doctor calls him: *Vir doctrina undique perspicuus.* (*Theol. Mor.* lib. i. tract. i. *De Conscientia*, n. 70.)

of the natural law, even though dubious, obscure, or impenetrable. And on what do they base their unjust pretension? On this general and cruel maxim, that, in things which refer to the natural law, one can never excuse himself by alleging invincible ignorance.

If I mistake not, some time ago I wrote to your Reverence a letter of the same tenor as this; probably it never reached you. The present letter, I hope, will arrive safe, and will secure for me the consolation of your support in this controversy. Your wisdom and your name will be esteemed better authority among the learned than my writings.

In conclusion, I commend myself to your prayers, and humbly tender you my feeble services.

Your Reverence's very humble and devoted servant,

ALPHONSUS MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata de' Goti.

After the original preserved in the municipal library of Munich (Bavaria). *Cod. Mss.*, 1405, 9.

LETTER 151 (*bis*).

To Signor Giambattista Remondini.

He sends him for insertion in the *Moral* a very important *Monitum* in regard to the prohibition of *Probabilism*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, April 25, 1765,

Most Illustrious Sir: A suggestion, sent me from Palermo, has come in time, before the reprinting of the *Moral*. It is that there must necessarily be joined to this work an explanation of the Decree of the Holy Office of the year 1761, which Decree, according to Father Patuzzi, prohibits all Probabilism. I have shown in my *Apology* that this is

absolutely false. Here, then, is the precise place in the *Moral* at which the explanation must be inserted: after the *Dissertation* on the *Probable Opinion*, at the place designated on the enclosed little slip. This explanation should be preceded by the word *Monitum*, as a leading-title.[1]

This insertion, I repeat, is a necessary one, for the Decree in question has frightened many. Thanks, however, to certain steps taken, I have cleared up the matter in such a way as to dissipate all doubts.

Before closing, I beg you not to omit sending a good number of my *Apologies* to Sicily and Rome, from which places I have received very urgent requests for them. As regards Naples, your copies have not yet arrived.

I am still waiting for the copies of the *Dedication*.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

[1] MONITUM, *in quo exponitur Decretum S. C. Generalis Inquisitionis Romanæ, conditum anno* 1761, *circa usum opinionum probabilium.* This is found in every edition, beginning with the sixth, at the end of the treatise *De Conscientia.*

LETTER 152.

To the Same.

A repetition of preceding letters.—He asks for information about Patuzzi.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, May 12, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: I wrote to you last week that the two hundred and six copies of the *Apology* and the two *Compendiums* of Ferraris had come to hand. Previously to their arrival, I received the volumes of St. Thomas together with a single *Compendium* of Ferraris. Having, however, mislaid the letter indicating the price and number of the volumes of St. Thomas (which volumes I had to send to a certain house of my Congregation), I requested you quite a long time ago to let me know the number of volumes of St. Thomas sent, the cost of the same, and also the cost of the three *Compendiums* of Ferraris.

I waited for this information so as to send you all the money at once, and with it the amount due for the two hundred and six *Apologies* (the cost of which I already knew). I have, however, been waiting four weeks for a letter, but in vain. I am ignorant of the cause of this silence.

Please write to me at once, and send me information on all these points, as I am very anxious.

I had hoped to find among the *Apologies* the copies of the *Dedication* printed separate from the work; but after repeated searching, I could discover nothing. Of the folios of Father Patuzzi's new *Reply*, I have received the first only.

I also announced to you that I had obtained the royal approbation at Naples, so that you may freely distribute

copies of the *Apology* among the booksellers of the capital. I think I shall quickly dispose of the two hundred and six you sent me. I shall then ask you to send me some more, for I hear that many are desirous of procuring the work. I have, nevertheless, given out very few, as I am at this moment having printed the royal approbation so as to insert it in the work.

I am striving, though it is not necessary, to obtain the ecclesiastical approbation also, and I shall soon have it. The government approbation alone was indispensable, and this I have secured.

Let me know whether you have received the manuscript through Signor Moschini.

To conclude, one thing afflicts me, and that is that I have been so long without any news from you.

Tendering you my sincerest respects, I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] I should like to know, in case you have knowledge of the fact, whether Father Patuzzi has replied to the work of Signor Corrado, in which the latter treats him as a heretic for having written that the Bull *Unigenitus* is not dogmatic.[1] In case Patuzzi has published a response, please procure a copy for me, and send it on, indicating the price.

[1] Father Patuzzi made this assertion in his Italian work, entitled: "Encyclical Letter of the Sovereign Pontiff Benedict XIV. to the General Assembly of the Clergy of France. Explained and Defended by Eusebius Eraniste against the Author of Questions proposed to the Cardinals and Theologians of the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda." (1 vol. in 8vo, Lugano, 1758.)

Inform me, also, whether the reprinting of the *Moral* has been commenced.

After the original preserved at Padua, in the Basilica of S. Antonio.

LETTER 153.

To the Same.

He asks for the sheets of Father Patuzzi's *Reply*, and for the price of certain works.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

[SANT' AGATA, May 1765.]

Most Illustrious Sir: I sent you word last week that, after a long interval of waiting, I had received two letters from you, and with them the first folio of the *Index* and the last only of the second *Reply* of Father Patuzzi; so that, with the exception of folio *A*, all the others down to the second last inclusive, are wanting to me. I beg you, therefore, to send me these sheets as soon as possible.

Once more I request you to send me the list of the volumes of St. Thomas that you forwarded to me, and indicate the price of the same; for I have mislaid your first letter. Tell me, likewise, the price of the three supplements of Father Ferraris.

I hope that by this time the reprinting of the *Moral* has been commenced.

I am waiting for the notice of the different prices just referred to, so as to send you all the money at once. I shall add thereto the amount due for the two hundred and six

Apologies. I have sent these latter to Naples to be bound.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the municipal library of Bassano (Venice).

LETTER 154.

To the Same.

He again asks for the folios of Father Patuzzi's new *Reply*, and speaks of an *Appendix* destined for the *Apology* and directed against a new work of the Rigorists.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, June 2, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: I received your last favor of the 18th of May, and I am pleased that the latest addition to the *Moral*, concerning the Decree of the Holy Office, has reached you. Everything is going well, though I have not yet had the consolation of hearing that the reprinting has been commenced.

Once more I beg you to tell me the cost of the volumes of St. Thomas that you sent me, also of the three supplements of Ferraris. I wish to remit to you the money due for the volumes of St. Thomas and the *Apologies* along with forty ducats that Father Ferrara sent me for you.

I have not yet received the *Dedications*. If they do

come now, they will be of no service. Owing to their great delay, I had them printed at Naples, in order to insert them in my *Apologies*.

I am anxiously awaiting the other folios of Patuzzi's latest *Reply*. Send them to me as soon as possible. The fact is, as I have mentioned it to you in preceding letters, I had the misfortune to lose your letter, and with it the greater part of the sheets. I have only the preface and the first and last folios. From the second, therefore, to the one before the last inclusive, all are wanting. Please send me the missing sheets as soon as possible.

I am rejoiced to hear that you have sent my *Apologies* to Rome, Sicily, etc. Here at Naples, I am besieged with requests for the work. I hear that many learned persons, after having obtained, I know not how, a copy of my *Apology*, have abandoned their previous opinion and adopted mine as certain. Father Patuzzi will deny this, but it is the truth.

I have not yet given to the public the copies you sent me. I am at this moment composing an *Appendix* in refutation of another work against me that appeared at the same time as Patuzzi's, bearing the title: "Rule of Morals".[1] I am now finishing this *Appendix*, and as soon as it is completed, I shall forward it to you, in case you may wish to add it to the copies of the *Apology* that remain on hand.

I adopted this form of appendix, that I might not have

1 "Rule of Morals, in Opposition to the False Maxims of a Corrupt Moral, with an Appendix. Naples, 1764, Simoni Brothers." It is the work of the French Benedictine Gabriel Gerberon. The translation is by Mgr. Bottari, the appendix, by Father Micheli, of the Roman Oratory.

to compose a new book in opposition to this "Rule of Morals". The *Appendix* calls for only a few folios.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 155.

To the Same.

He alludes to a paragraph for the *Appendix* in refutation of the new *Reply* of Father Patuzzi.—Success of the *Apology*.—Warm recommendation to reprint the *Moral*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

S'NT' AGATA, June 26, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: Thanks be to God, I received in good time Father Patuzzi's little work, his latest *Reply*. I say *in good time*, for I was just completing the *Appendix*, a fine opportunity for adding a new paragraph in which to make a brief reply to the principal objections Father Patuzzi brings against me.

As soon as the *Apology* is finished, I shall forward it to you through Signor Moschini.

I have received, also, the bill for the volumes of St. Thomas and Ferraris, also for the *Apologies*. I send you the entire amount, two hundred and ninety-two lire, eight grains, just as you stated in the bill.

In regard to the *Dedications*, I have received neither fifty nor one hundred and fifty from Migliaccio. It is, however, a matter of little interest to me, as I have had a

number of copies printed here, and these will suffice for the two hundred and six *Apologies* you sent me.

I now ask you to send me as quickly as possible three hundred new *Apologies*, for I desire to sell them at the houses of our Congregation, and through another channel, also. I shall send you the money for them only as I succeed in selling them. Please forward them soon and by the ordinary route, without calling any further on the services of Sabatelli.

Thus far I have not had the consolation of learning that the reprinting of the *Moral* has begun. Everybody is asking me: *When will the new Moral appear?* I answer: *It should now be in press.* But I always find that I have made a wrong statement. Indeed, to judge from present appearances, I shall very likely die without having seen this new edition, for which many others are as anxious as myself. You must, I think, have finished the reprinting of the works of Benedict XIV. long ago. Please, then, begin my *Moral.*

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] I am now sending you forty ducats, not on my own account, but for Father Ferrara, who has charged me with this duty. To this I add two hundred and ninety-two lire, eight grains, the cost of the books sent me, that is to say, of the volumes of St. Thomas, Ferraris, and the *Apologies.*

As regards the latest *Reply* of Father Patuzzi, I hear that the partisans of this author have already had the work reprinted at Naples. I cannot see what good they discover in it. I have read it, and found nothing in it but random talk. As others have remarked to me, poor Father Patuz-

zi sees that he is beaten, and tries to escape by a display of subtle nonsense. For the rest, my work appears to be receiving the unanimous approbation of the learned. I have always had but one aim, namely, the discovery of the truth.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 156.

To the Same.

He thanks him for a service rendered, and alludes to his second *Response* to Father Patuzzi. He urges him to print the new edition of the *Moral*.

Live Jesus and Mary!

AIROLA, July 1, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: Thanks be to God, I have received through Signor Moschini the second *Reply* of Patuzzi. I am very much obliged to you for this favor. They were just printing the last folios of the *Appendix*, and I had an opportunity of inserting, or rather adding, in a new paragraph (the third), some brief reflections relative to the new objections Father Patuzzi brings forward against me in his latest *Reply*, entitled: "Observations".[1]

Last week I sent you about eighty ducats, that is, forty in the name of Father Ferrara, and about thirty-eight, according to the value of lire, in payment for the *Apologies*, the volumes of St. Thomas and Ferraris. I sent this money to you through Signor Moschini.

[1] "Theological Observations on the Apology written by the Most Illustrious and Right Rev. Mgr. D. Alfonso de Liguori in Opposition to the book, entitled: The Cause of Probabilism, etc. In which Observations the Falsity and Inconsistency of the New System proposed and upheld by His Lordship, are More Clearly Exposed. Ferrara (Venice), Remondini, Publisher, 1765, in 8vo."

Have you commenced the new edition of the *Moral?* It seems to me that I have been waiting an age for this news.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 157.

To the Same.

He asks for two hundred copies of the *Apology*, and requests the publisher to procure for him a certain work.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

AIROLA, July 2, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: I wrote last week, informing you of the receipt of the second *Reply* of Father Patuzzi, entitled: "Observations". Once more, I am very thankful to you. I also reiterate my request to send me two hundred more copies of the *Apology*. I intend trying to have them sold, also by the houses of our Congregation. As soon as they are disposed of, I shall send you the price. Have the kindness to forward these two hundred copies as soon as possible.

I beg you, moreover, to inform me whether you have any knowledge of a certain publication translated from the French, entitled: "Demonstration of the Principles of the Christian Religion, an Anonymous Work translated from the French by . . . Canon of Florence."

If, perchance, you should learn that this work has been printed at Venice, purchase a copy for me, and send it on

immediately, indicating the price. It is issued in five volumes. I want it for my personal use, not for others.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] When an opportunity offers, do not fail, I entreat you, to despatch to Sicily a large number of copies of the *Apology*. I hear that it is in demand there, especially at Palermo.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 158.

To the Same.

He again informs the publisher of the remittance of money, and urges him to hasten the despatch of the *Apologies*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, July 8, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: In my last letter I announced that I had forwarded to you through Signor Moschini eighty ducats, of which about thirty-eight were for the volumes of St. Thomas, Ferraris, and the *Apologies*. Forty ducats were in the name of our Father Ferrara. He has just written to me that he is sending you through another medium ninety ducats.

Once more, please despatch to me as soon as possible, two hundred new copies of the *Apology*, as I hope to have them sold by the houses of our Congregation.

I repeat it, send them to me *as soon as possible*. I am

waiting for them, also for news that the printing of the *Moral* has been commenced.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 159.

To Father Don Niccolò Savio, Priest of the Oratory of Palermo, at L'Olivella.

He sends him four copies of the *Appendix* to the *Apology*.—Sentiments of Father Caldarera of the Oratory, touching the Probabilism of the holy Doctor.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, July 21, 1765.

Very Reverend and Honored Father: I have published an *Appendix* to the *Apology*, a work of mine with which you are acquainted. A short time ago I sent you four copies of it, and now I offer you these four *Appendixes* that you may give in my name a copy of each to my estimable friend, Father Bonanno, and the two others to the Father Provincial of the Jesuits and to Father Gravina.

I was obliged in this *Appendix*, to respond to a new book recently published and entitled: "Rule of Morals", in which it is denied that there can exist invincible ignorance on any point whatsoever of the natural law, even though a point be obscure and most remote from first principles.

Whilst the last sheets of the *Appendix* were being printed, the second *Reply* of Father Patuzzi fell into my hands. It was written in opposition to my *Apology*.

I did not wish to take up my pen once more against him, as his arguments are antiquated, and I intend to be faithful

to my resolution to reply no further. It was only necessary for me to refute in a particular manner two objections of an altogether new theology, invented by Father Patuzzi in opposition to the principle I have demonstrated, namely, that the precepts of the natural law, when they are doubtful, do not oblige, because they are not sufficiently promulgated.

I beg you to keep me in your friendship, and do not forget to recommend me to Jesus Christ in the holy Mass.

At Rome and in other parts of Italy, there is a great demand for my *Apology*. I shall, therefore, be obliged to have it reprinted.

With sentiments of deep respect, I subscribe myself, Very Reverend Father,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] I wish to give you a laugh. I have heard that at Naples, our good Father Caldarera wept over my fate. He looks upon me as damned, because, forsooth, I do not follow the Rigorist Doctrine which he espoused in a conversation with the Oratorian Fathers of Rome, who make it their boast that they defend this beautiful teaching. *Poor old man!* said Father Caldarera with tears in his eyes, *he will damn himself on account of this opinion of his!*

That I have good reason to fear on account of my real sins, I acknowledge, but I cannot damn myself by reason of this opinion, because I hold it for certain. In my diocese, I refuse the faculty of hearing confessions to anyone who follows the Rigorist opinion, for I regard it as false and pernicious to the welfare of poor souls. This I have written more at length to Father Caldarera himself.

These anti-Probabilists imagine that they are seeking the honor of God, and they do not wish to see that in contemning the Probabilists, they are maintaining their own

opinion and flattering their own self-love. As though one could not become holy without following their Rigorism, which is driving souls either to despair or to laxity. And, indeed, it is an easy thing for a person to become lax when he perceives himself too much hemmed in by the obligations of conscience.

Reflect especially, Reverend Father, on the opinion of the early Fathers themselves with regard to the absolving of penitents. You will find it at the end of § ii. of the *Appendix* that I am sending you.

Among the letters that follow this passage, that is to say, at the end of the *Appendix*, will be found the beautiful epistle of your Reverence.[1]

After an old copy.

[1] The letter of Father Savio, as printed in the *Appendix*, is as follows:

"Your Lordship cannot imagine with what anxiety people in this capital [Palermo] waited for your response to Father Patuzzi, and in particular for what you had to say concerning the supposed condemnation of all Probabilism. But I now assure you that in proportion to the greatness of the anxiety, was the universal joy when you were seen to refute with your accustomed solidity and clearness, everyone of the objections.

The two principles or foundations of your holy and Christian *Probabilism* have triumphed wonderfully, to wit: if the law is not promulgated, or if is not certain, it can never, never, oblige. To the powerful arguments and authorities which you adduce, your adversaries can oppose only cavils and sophisms.

As regards the Decree of the Sacred Congregation [of the year 1761] relative to the supposed condemnation, it is clear that it has no force whatever in the sense that your opponents attribute to it. The terms in which the condemnation of the Folio or Theses is conceived, do not at all resemble those that the Sovereign Pontiffs employ when condemning certain propositions. The difference in the two cases is a notable one, since the propositions contained in the Folio are not condemned separately, as is ordinarily the case with such propositions. Moreover, the letters your Lordship has received from Rome, from persons so circumspect and of such

LETTER 160.

To Signor Giambattista Remondini.

He asks for information concerning the *True Spouse of Jesus Christ*, and proposes to reprint the Italian *Instruction*. He requests him to send copies of the *Apology* to Rome.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, August 1, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: I told you in my last letter that I had received the second *Reply* of Patuzzi; indeed, I have received two copies, and I again thank you for this favor.

I now desire to know whether you have commenced, or perhaps, as I am led to judge from what you wrote me, finished the reprinting of the *Spouse of Jesus Christ*. In the latter case, I wish you to send a large number of copies to Naples, where there are none to be found, the last edition being exhausted.

I wish to make another suggestion: If you should ever have the intention of reprinting my Italian *Instruction* in three volumes, let me know. I mention this because a new edition of the work has been issued lately at Naples. Knowing that they were reprinting it, I added many useful points and introduced some corrections. Inform me, then, whenever you wish to reprint this book and I shall straightway despatch to you, through Signor Moschini, one of the copies which the publishers have presented to me.

authority, sufficiently demonstrate the sentiment of the Sacred Congregation and His Holiness. Sound Probabilism, far from being proscribed, has come forth from this trial victorious. All learned men are congratulating your Lordship for having set forth in bright light the doctrine of St. Thomas, Moderate Probabilism.

I remain, etc.

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

NICCOLÒ SAVIO, of the Oratory.

PALERMO, May 30, 1765.

Do not forget to send me as quickly as possible the two hundred new *Apologies*. I have written this to you in a number of letters lately. I desire to dispose of these copies at our houses.

Several weeks ago I sent you the *Appendix* through Signor Moschini; but the two hundred *Apologies* I should like to have as quickly as possible. Do not neglect to send a large number to Rome, where I know they are in great demand, and where, as a friend has written me, they have not yet appeared in any bookstore.

Inform me likewise whether you have received the twenty-four lire, the price of the *Cistercian Offices*. I had forgotten to send the money; however, I have forwarded it through Signor Moschini.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 161.

To the Same.

He rejoices that the reprinting of the *Moral* is at hand. He has printed in one volume all his writings relative to Probabilism.—Diverse details.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, September 4, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: This evening I received two most esteemed letters from you. I knew immediately that the report of the death of Father Patuzzi was false.

I am rejoiced to hear that you are about to begin the

reprinting of the *Moral.* I am rejoiced, I say, for one of your latest letters in which you alluded to the reprinting as a thing far off, pained me. At my advanced age (I enter my seventieth year this month), I was afflicted at the prospect of not beholding before I die, this new edition for which I have so strenuously labored. I said to myself: If I had only known that the reprinting was to be deferred so many years, I could have had it done here in Naples, and I should then have beheld it before my death. Now, however, you give me reason to hope that the work will soon appear. I trust, I shall not be deceived, and that I shall see those who are longing for this new edition gratified.

With regard to the complete edition of my ascetical works, many years more will certainly have to pass before my eyes shall look upon it. Still I am content to see the *Moral*, at least, printed.

Later on, when I shall have hopes of soon beholding the ascetical collection, I shall send you the small work in manuscript which I have composed in opposition to the book, entitled: "Christian Confidence",[1] though it deserves better to be called "Christian Diffidence". This publication will assuredly be prohibited, as has happened to the "Rule of Morals", which created so great a stir in Naples, and which formed, in truth, a companion-volume to that of Father Patuzzi.

As to my *Apology*, I have to inform you that the copies at Naples are exhausted, and as I cherish no hope of getting shortly the two hundred more that I requested, I have had the printing of a new work begun, one I had in contemplation. It will be shorter and better arranged, for, as

[1] This book had for its author a Frenchman, the Abbè Fourquevaux. It was translated into Italian by Aletofilo Pacifico, the pseudonym of Constantino Rotigni, Benedictine Prior. It is thoroughly Jansenistic. St. Alphonsus wrote a book in refutation, the Italian text of which remained inedited.

I wrote to you, I have collected into one volume all that was contained in the *Dissertation*, in the *Apology*, and in the *Appendix*. It will be shorter, because I was obliged in my *Apology* to repeat a great number of things already contained in the *Dissertation*, and in the *Appendix* I had to iterate many things found in the *Apology*: all this is to refute the objections brought forward by Patuzzi in his first and second *Replies*. As a result, the new work is a finished one, well arranged, and, as I have remarked, more brief.[1] To send you the original copy, however, was a thing not to be thought of. It abounds with marginal notes and little slips, the meaning of which I myself can scarcely discover, not to speak of the necessity I shall be under of correcting and recorrecting, suppressing and adding, during the course of the printing. I shall have only a few copies printed. As soon as they are finished, I shall send you one.

Meantime, see that a number of my *Apologies* be sent to Rome. I myself have forwarded over seventy copies, but the demand for the work is very great. Cardinal Feroni[2] has written a special letter to me, informing me that orders have been sent to Venice for more copies, as they are being sought for at Rome in every direction, but cannot be found. I am expecting the work "Demonstration of Principles, etc.", published at Piacenza. Send it without delay.

I am thankful to you for the fifty copies of the *True Spouse*, which you intend sending me. I shall recommend to our houses the sale of the remaining hundred.

I have already written to my agent at Naples to forward

1 This volume was entitled, as we have observed: "On the Moderate Use of the Probable Opinion", and was dedicated to Pope Clement XIII. For this *Dedication*, see Letter 146, p. 290.

2 Prefect of the Congregation of Rites.

to you, through Signor Moschini, a copy of the Italian *Instruction*.

My dear friend, it was not I that printed this *Instruction*. It was, I think, booksellers of Naples, that is to say, Cristofero Migliaccio, as you will perceive from the title-page. Michele Stasi, also, had a hand in it, at least that is my opinion. Seeing that they were reprinting the work, and not wishing to have it filled with errors (for in Naples, woe to the works that are not revised by the author himself!), I revised it, and introduced various corrections and additions. I cannot hinder the publishers from reprinting my books. My regret is, that they have reprinted some without my revision, and oh, what a number of mistakes they contain! They have, in particular, issued an edition of my book on the Madonna,[1] so filled with errors that it is an outrage!

With sentiments of deep esteem and affection, I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] Please tell me whether the printing of Patuzzi's *Moral* is only being commenced, or whether it is nearing completion.

Many persons are desirous to have included in my *Moral* the two lists of the propositions, or opinions I have retracted. These lists are not found in the last edition, but were contained in the one preceding. You will do well, then, to insert them in the coming edition. In case you have no copies, I shall send them to you, and add thereto other opinions I have, likewise, retracted.

Since you are on the point of reprinting the *Moral*, as you have given me reason to hope, I have resolved to rewrite more carefully that small Latin *Dissertation*, pub-

[1] "The Glories of Mary."

lished already in the *Guide for Confessors*, and which should be inserted also in this new edition of the large *Moral*.[1] My reason for rewriting the *Dissertation*, is, that I want to arrange it in better form. In doing so, I shall profit by the latest objections of Patuzzi and my responses to the same. This *Dissertation*, as you know, was composed before Father Patuzzi published his *Replies*. I shall begin the rewriting without delay and hasten to complete it, so that in two or three weeks I shall send it to you.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 162.

To the Same.

He promises to send the new *Dissertation*, which will confer an additional value on the coming edition of the *Moral*. —Various details.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, September 15, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: I hope in about a week to complete the Latin *Dissertation* to which I alluded in my last letter,

[1] We have already seen (Letter 100) how the holy Doctor had prepared for the fifth edition of his *Moral*, this new *Dissertation*, in which he explicitly unfolds his own System of Equi-Probabilism. Remondini, however, neglected to insert it in the *Moral*, and placed it instead at the end of the "Guide for Country Confessors". Father Patuzzi having, meanwhile, brought forward new objections against the System of St. Alphonsus, the holy Doctor again took up his pen, and explained his opinion more at length and with stronger proof, concentrating in the "Dissertation on the Moderate Use of the Probable Opinion", all his arguments and answers to objections. The *Dissertation* in question accompanied the sixth and seventh editions of the *Moral*. In subsequent editions it was replaced by a more complete treatise, entitled: *Morale Systema*.

I mean the *Dissertation* on the Probable Opinion. It is intended for the new edition of the *Moral*, and is to be inserted in place of the one that accompanied the preceding editions, and also of the one I had originally designed to be introduced into the *Guide for Confessors*, and which was, in fact, introduced into the same.

This *Dissertation*, the latest production of my pen, is much shorter than the one hitherto contained in the large *Moral*. It is at the same time much more forcible and better arranged, and contains quite a number of new things as a result of the replies I was constrained to make to the objections of Father Patuzzi.

I have labored unceasingly at this task for several weeks, and, thanks be to God, I am now near the end. When finished, I shall send you the manuscript in a little box, through Signor Moschini, as usual.

More than one person, I hope (in fact, I am convinced of it), will purchase the coming edition just because it contains this new *Dissertation*, which is so different and so great an improvement on the preceding one.

Together with the *Dissertation*, I shall forward the two lists of propositions retracted by me, for many readers desire very much to see them. To this latest edition I shall also add the propositions I have recently retracted.

The public are waiting with impatience for the edition in question, but I trust (and I base this trust on your last letter), they will soon be gratified. For many years have they been waiting for this work.

Yesterday I received a letter from you, announcing to me the despatch of three hundred new copies of the *Apology*, together with the work, entitled: "Demonstration of Principles". I thank you most heartily. The money for the latter I shall transmit to you through Signor Moschini.

As regards that for the *Apologies*, I shall send it to you as I succeed in selling them. I see, you grant me a discount of forty per cent, though I do not mean to secure any profit. I shall endeavor to have added to these *Apologies* the copies of the *Appendix* still on hand, and I shall sell them for the same price as you have marked, deducting the same discount. I am perfectly willing to make a sacrifice of the money for the *Appendixes*.

I mention all this to you, because books of this kind do not always sell so easily. People borrow them from one another, and once their curiosity has been satisfied, they care little to secure copies. I have warned you of this, for in case I find it difficult to dispose of them, I shall lower the price as much as will be necessary for their sale, and in doing so, I shall consider it furthering your interests. You will, therefore, grant me this liberty, the more so as I am already occupied in reprinting the work, though in better form and more condensed, as I wrote to you in my last letter.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] Let me know whether my *Apologies* have been received where they were so eagerly demanded (as I have so often written to you). I have not yet heard from Rome of their arrival, though I know for a fact that orders for them were sent to Venice quite a while ago. In regard to the reprinting of the *Moral*, I was more consoled by a preceding letter of yours than by the last. You seemed disposed then to commence the new edition more quickly than you give evidence of in your last letter.

I beg you once more (and I conclude my letter here-

with), to please tell me whether the *Moral Theology* that Father Patuzzi is now composing, will appear shortly, or whether it will be delayed for some time.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 163.

To Signor Don Iacopo Menchini, at Lucca.

He informs him of his intention to send the collective volume of his writings on Probabilism. He informs him of the publication of a *Moral Theology* by Father Patuzzi, and alludes to the appearance in the near future of his own *Moral.*

Live Jesus and Mary!

SANT' AGATA, September 19, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received your esteemed favor, and I am pleased that my Moral *Instruction* and my *Apology* have already reached you. I was obliged to have the latter work reprinted here at Naples, as the last edition was exhausted. I took advantage of this occasion, to arrange the work in better form; in fact, I have reunited in one whole my *Dissertation*, the *Apology*, and the *Appendix;* for the *Apology* contained many passages borrowed from the *Dissertation*, whilst in turn the *Appendix* included a number taken from the *Apology*. Hence the new volume is a unique whole, treating of the moderate use of the Probable Opinion. I have inserted at the proper places the objections of Father Patuzzi, also those of the author of the "Rule of Morals", a work which I understand from a reliable source has been prohibited in Rome. I joined thereto all my answers to these objections, as well as some other instructive remarks that occurred to my mind too late for previous publication. This work is,

therefore, better arranged and more compendious. When completed, I shall send it to you.

I hear that my *Apology* has met with a favorable reception everywhere. A great number of learned men have praised the work, declaring that this subject, formerly quite confused, is now clear.

To tell the truth, I was not pleased with the way in which the Probabilists formerly defended the use of the Probable Opinion, and I was not without anxiety on the point; for they brought to bear in their favor certain principles and arguments not at all conclusive.

My *Apology* has given singular satisfaction in Rome, as has been written to me from that city. What has surprised me beyond measure is, that even certain semi-Jansenists have praised the work. It has been favorably received in Sicily, where Concina and Patuzzi were wont to be held in great esteem. May all this redound to the glory of God, who certainly abominates the excessive rigor that is so prejudicial to souls!

I now pass to another subject. You asked me to procure some sure information concerning the arrival of your nephew at Naples, and his entrance into the house of the Marquis of S. Eramo. I know that the Marquis is an honorable gentleman. You must explain to me in what particulars you wish information, whether in regard to the conduct of your nephew or to something else. As for myself, I never leave my diocese, and I am never at Naples, but through others I can learn what you desire to know.

It is now my turn to ask you a favor. You have sent me two lists printed at Lucca, which contain the opinions retracted or changed by me, and are to accompany a new edition of the *Instruction* already published. They came to hand, but I happened to mislay them, and, search as I might, I have been unable to find them. As they would be of great service to me, I beg you to send me two more

copies, by post, if possible, for to transmit them *via* Leghorn would take too long.

Father Patuzzi, I hear, is preparing a large *Moral* for publication. I think he will refute in it many opinions held by Father Concina, whom he deems very lax. I hope to see published before long the latest edition of my own *Moral* in quarto, for Remondini has written to me that he intends to commence the reprinting in a short time. Besides the corrections, this new edition will contain much additional useful instruction, also some altogether new treatises.

I recommend myself once more to your prayers, and tender you my humble respects. I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original in the possession of Count Azzolini at Rome.

LETTER 164.

To Signor Giambattista Remondini.

He sends him the new *Dissertation* on the Probable Opinion, and alludes to the value which this writing will add to the new edition of the *Moral*. He forwards a sheet containing opinions retracted.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, November 6, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: I send you herewith the *Dissertation* on the use of the Probable Opinion. It should be substituted for the old one. It is shorter than the latter, though more elaborate and replete with solid matter. I

have inserted in it, though in abridged form, the objections of Father Patuzzi, at least the most important ones, together with my answers thereto. I pray you to preserve this *Dissertation* carefully, as it has cost me a great deal of labor.

When it is being printed, recommend to the compositor to be attentive, since the original which I am sending you, contains many erasures. With much more reason do I recommend vigilance to him who has to revise it. He must be well acquainted with Latin, and experienced in such work; for with all these erasures, I think the compositor will inevitably commit many mistakes, and these the proof-reader will have to detect.

A great many will, I feel convinced, procure the *Moral* solely on account of this *Dissertation*. The former contained only things already known, things already said by others; the present, on the contrary, includes a number of new things, especially in regard to the recent objections of Father Patuzzi. These latter are refuted in such a manner that the very friends of Patuzzi have avowed (I know it for a fact) that this time Patuzzi has been worsted in the contest he has been waging against me through his writings. I do not say this to praise myself, but rather for the glory of God, who has given me light to answer all the sophisms of Father Patuzzi. Thanks be to God, this matter is now, as many readers declare, set in a clear light, and more than one learned man has changed his opinion after having examined my work.

The *Dissertation* in question is, therefore, an original production, one not found in other books; and now that it is translated into Latin in this new edition, it will receive attention from the Ultramontanes also. After its perusal many of them will, I trust, change their opinion.

I hope to behold this new edition before I die. I thought to see it finished several years ago, but my eyes have not yet beheld it.

Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] Together with the *Dissertation*, I am sending you a sheet on which are marked all the opinions that I have retracted since the publication of the list printed in the Bologna edition of 1760, which may be found at the commencement of the work, page iv. At the end of this list, you should add all the other retractions noted on the sheet I am forwarding, and announced thus: *Adduntur aliæ recentes, etc.*

Many desire to see this list of opinions retracted by me, those formerly retracted as well as those of a later date. Please, then, insert them in the new edition. Do not fail to do this, for in the edition prior to that of 1760, it was omitted, to the great chagrin of the readers.[1]

The Latin *Dissertation* should be placed at the end of the first treatise, the one *De Conscientia;* thus you will find it marked on the original manuscript which I sent you some years ago for this new edition.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

1 The edition of 1767 (the sixth) contained both the "Dissertatio de usu moderato opinionis probabilis", and the List in question, containing twenty-three new propositions changed by the holy Doctor.

LETTER 165.

To the Same.

Recommendations relative to the forwarding of books, and to the coming edition of the *Moral*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, November 17, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received your last letter of the 2d of November. In reply I inform you that I received two hundred *Apologies*, as also the "Demonstrations of Principles"; the other one hundred copies of the *Apology*, however, and the *Spouses* have not yet reached me. I have written to my agent at Naples to be on the lookout for them, and to send me word as soon as they arrive.

I wish to ask you a favor. When you are forwarding to me a packet of books, see whether you have not some for any of our booksellers, and send them all together. At Naples the charge for a large parcel is no greater than for the smallest. The cost is about the same.

Do not forget to inform me when you receive the *Dissertation*. I should regret very much the loss of the work, and I am troubled at your not having as yet received it.

I am pleased to hear that toward the end of this autumn you will commence the reprinting of the *Moral*. I trust I shall soon have the consolation of hearing that you have begun.

I have already commenced to sell the *Apologies* you sent me, and have forwarded a number to our houses. Leave this matter to me. I am certainly more careful of your interests than those of other publishers. However, as I wrote to you lately, you have printed too many copies of this work. This kind of controversial writings does not usually have much sale. People, as I mentioned to you,

are in the habit of borrowing such books, and in that way, many read them without purchasing a copy.

As regards the new edition of the *Moral*, it will have, I trust, a prompt and extensive sale. Let me recommend to you to have clear type and good paper. When good paper is used, people do not mind paying a little more for the book.

I repeat once more, the proof-reader must be a man who understands not only Latin, but also the sense of the text; otherwise, he will certainly make many blunders. You assure me that the proof-reader is thoroughly competent. All will go well then, I trust.

With sentiments of profound respect, I subscribe myself, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] Please inform me of the price of the *Spouse of Christ.*

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 166.

To the Same.

He fears the *Dissertation* may have been lost on the way.

Live Jesus and Mary!

ARIENZO, December 12, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: Your esteemed letter has come to hand, announcing that you had as yet received neither the little box nor my new Latin *Dissertation* on the use of the Probable Opinion. I am very sorry to hear this, as I despatched it to you about three months ago, and I have thus far received no news of its arrival. Please inform me

whether the work has yet reached you. If not, I shall be obliged to rewrite it, quite a task for me, as a whole month of uninterrupted labor will be necessary for it; and there is nothing more tedious than to do over what has once been done.

Write to me, then, once more, I beg you; for if the little box has not arrived by the time this letter reaches you, it will be a sure sign that it has gone astray, and I shall have patiently to recommence my task. You now have an example of the risk one runs in transmitting originals.

My dear Sir, you cannot imagine how great the number at this place who are waiting to purchase copies of this next edition, and I am ashamed to tell them any longer that the reprinting will soon be commenced. If, however, the *Dissertation* in question is lost, you will have to wait until I have rewritten it. Answer immediately on receipt of this letter.

I have not yet received the copies of the *Spouse* or the one hundred *Apologies*, but I am not surprised, for vessels can do very little traffic in winter. There is no reason to think that the books have been lost *en route*, as I fear has happened to my *Dissertation.*

I send you enclosed a new note to be inserted in the new edition of the *Moral.* Have it preserved with the other papers.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] The letters I received from you have borne the signature sometimes of Signor D. Giambattista, sometimes of Signor D. Giuseppe. Please let me know, what name I should employ in my addresses.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 167.

To the Same.

The saint's joy on hearing that the *Dissertation* had arrived at Venice.—Recommendations relative to the printing of the *Moral*.—Announcement of a work he is preparing against atheists and deists.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, December 29, 1765.

Most Illustrious Sir: Whilst at table this morning, I received your very welcome letter, announcing the arrival of my *Dissertation*. I could not refrain from falling on my knees and thanking the Blessed Virgin for having brought the little box safe to you. I had been very anxious about it, fearing, that I should have to rewrite the *Dissertation*, after I had labored so hard to abridge it without omitting most important arguments and answers. It was with anxiety, therefore, that I awaited your letter, and I am very thankful to you for having written to me as soon as you received the little box.

I am also rejoiced to hear that the works of Noris and of Benedict XIV. are nearing completion, and that the time for reprinting my *Moral* is close at hand. The coming edition of this work will certainly be the last before my death.

It is useless for me to tell you again with what impatience people here are waiting for this edition. They have greeted with especial joy the announcement that it will appear in quarto, the form desired by everyone, because the most handy for studying.

Accompanying the *Dissertation*, you will have noticed the list of all the opinions retracted and changed by me. There is a great desire to see this list published.

Permit me to insist again on one point. Please recom-

mend to the compositor, as also to the proof-reader, to give close attention to each of the papers that I have sent from time to time, that they may insert them at their proper places, just as I have distinctly marked on each sheet. I am pleased to learn that the proof-reader is an able person. Still, you must warn him to be most vigilant, since many things are to be added, and many omitted; and if great attention is not paid, a thousand errors will creep in. The poor compositor sets up the type, not understanding what he is printing; hence the proof-reader must be all the more careful.

I have not yet received the one hundred *Apologies* or the *Spouse*, but it is not surprising, seeing that it is winter, and vessels travel but little. Just at present, also, transports of books from Manfredonia are very rare.

I have disposed of a number of *Apologies;* I do not know how many, as I have not yet drawn up the account. I am waiting till I sell some more, and then I shall forward to you the proceeds. I hear that the other copies, which you sent to the booksellers, are going rapidly. I have already received the information I desired with regard to the price of the *Spouse of Christ.*

At present I am writing a work against the modern heresies of atheists and deists,[1] since these errors are now everywhere in circulation. The Calvinists of England and the Jansenists of France are no longer Jansenists and Calvinists, but atheists and deists. They are continually scattering abroad books infested with their teaching. In Naples these books are sought after and read even by women, thus doing immense harm to souls.

1 This was published under the title: "The Truths of Faith, a Work against Materialists who deny the Existence of God, against Deists who deny Revealed Religion, and against Sectaries who deny that the Catholic Church is the One True Church."

Some time ago I published a short compendium [1] on this subject, but the work I am now composing is a more complete one, and will, I trust, greatly promote the glory of God. I have laid aside the *Compendium of the History of the Council of Trent* by Cardinal Pallavicinio, as I am anxious to publish the work alluded to, which is more useful. But, I must first have it printed at Naples. I have more than once given you my reasons for acting in this way. This edition, however, as is my custom, will be limited to a few copies. As soon as it is finished, I shall send it to you.

With feelings of profound respect, I am, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 168.

To Father Niccolò Savio, Priest of the Oratory of Palermo, at L'Olivella.

Purity of intention of the saint in his theological controversies.—Pernicious influence of the works of the Jansenists. —Sad results of Tutiorism.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, [January] 7, 1766.

Very Reverend and Honored Father: I have just received your esteemed letter, for which I thank you. Allow me to wish you, also, a very Happy New Year.

I have already written to our Brother Procurator, at Naples, to examine whether he has a copy left of the *Selva*

[1] He refers to the little work published in 1756, and entitled: "Short Dissertation against the Errors of Modern Unbelievers, called Materialists and Deists."

or *Retreat for Priests*, which I had printed some time ago. In case he can find none, I told him to purchase one of the copies printed in Venice by Remondini, and forward it to your Reverence together with the present letter.

I should prefer to have him find a copy of my Neapolitan edition, as the print is better and the text more correct. At any rate, you will receive one or the other. Do not speak to me of profit. It is but a trifle, and your Reverence deserves much more.

I am ignorant as to whether Father Patuzzi has ceased writing, but I hear that Father Gonzalez, a Dominican, was desirous to publish another letter against my work. They tell, me, however, that, unable to obtain the approbation at Naples, he had his book printed abroad.

Let my opponents act as they please. I have not written to acquire a name for myself, but solely to place the truth in clear light. If what I have written convinces my readers, I am satisfied; if not, I do not desire through passion to come forth victorious, as Father Patuzzi accuses me.

I regret that the learned gentlemen are so prejudiced as to refuse the title of learned to anyone that will not follow the fashion and defend Tutiorism, a doctrine so pernicious to souls. The French faction [1] having made many converts in a number of Catholic kingdoms, is triumphant, and souls are, in consequence, rushing daily to destruction. Let us pray to the Lord to remedy this great evil.

A book, entitled: "Reality of the Plan of Bourg- Fontaine" [2] has appeared. In it is clearly shown the purpose

[1] This name was given to the Jansenists.

[2] The origin of this curious work is due, says Cardinal Villecourt ("Vie et Institut de Saint Alphonse", vol. ii. p. 176), to Jean Filleau, Professor of Jurisprudence at Poitiers. This magistrate published, in 1654, a juridical report of a reunion of the principal Jansenists, held at Bourg-Fontaine, about eighteen leagues from the city of Paris. The Jesuit Father Sauvage enlarged this account in a work published in 1755, and entitled: "Reality of the Plan of Bourg-Fontaine". On

of the Jansenists to destroy the Church of Jesus Christ. It is a grand publication, everything being proved by authentic documents. Your Reverence should purchase a copy and read it. It is issued in two volumes, *duodecimo*. The Jesuit Fathers will give you the necessary information. The copy I have, was presented to me.

I am composing at this moment a complete work against the modern errors of deists and materialists. I have already finished a good part of it. Recommend me to the Lord that I may write in such a manner as to free from their deception so many unfortunate young people infected with these errors, the result in particular of the pestiferous books continually arriving from France, and more especially of those published by the Jansenist faction. Poor Church of God, so much combated in these days! We should shed tears over her lot and pray for her, although *portæ inferi non prævalebunt*. [The gates of hell shall not prevail against

the appearance of this book, which portrayed to the public the errors of these sectaries, a portrayal based on the assertions of their own leaders, the Jansenists became furious and proclaimed the publication a calumny. Dom Clemencet, Benedictine of St. Maur, and a Jansenist, endeavored to prove that the "Plan of Bourg-Fontaine" was nothing else than a calumnious invention. An answer to him was given in a second edition of the "Reality". This edition must have been unknown to St. Alphonsus, being published in 1787, the year of his death. This latter is the proper edition to be read. In it are contained all the proofs of the truth of this conspiracy of the chiefs of the party against the dogmas of the Church of God. Even though this assembly and this conspiracy had never taken place, the book in question would still continue to be a most valuable one, containing, as it does, much testimony from Jansenist authors themselves, which proved that they held the same abominable doctrines as had been attributed to the assembly of Bourg-Fontaine. The anonymous author of the Italian translation does not seem to have been aware of the edition of 1787; but as he wrote at the time of the French Revolution, he finds therein an unexceptionable proof of the Jansenistic schemes.

her.] Still, it is our duty to pray. For my part, I offer up this intention every morning at Mass.

Do not forget to recommend me to Jesus Christ.

With sentiments of profound respect, I remain, Reverend Father,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] One word more, to relieve my soul. What is the origin of Tutiorism, and the horror with which its partisans reject every probable opinion? It is this proposition: *Aliqua Dei præcepta sunt impossibilia, etc.* [Some commandments of God are impossible, etc.] And in its turn Tutiorism becomes to an immense number of unfortunate souls the source of complete laxity. May God provide a remedy!

After an old copy.

LETTER 169.

To Signor Giambattista Remondini.

He sends a copy of a theological work.—His purpose in writing it.—He asks the publisher to procure for him a book, entitled: "Christian Confidence".

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, [January] 18, 1766.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received your last letter. In reply I must say again, as I declared in a preceding letter, that I learned with joy of the arrival of the little box containing my *Dissertation* and the list of my retracted opinions, a list so impatiently awaited.

I am forwarding to you, through Signor Moschini, a copy of the work on the Probable Opinion, being the new edition in which things are arranged in better order and numerous additions introduced. I send it as a token of my

regard for you. I shall not forget about your *Apologies*, and shall endeavor to sell them to the best advantage.

I have had only a small number of copies of this new edition printed, and most of them I am sending as presents to the bishops of Italy and to the Superiors of Religious Orders residing in Rome. I have composed the work, not to acquire a name for myself—indeed, my death is quite near—but that the truth may be made clear. The Rigorist Opinion, having worked itself into vogue, was causing immense harm to souls, leading them by excessive rigor, into the peril of eternal destruction. I have written, then, only for the good of souls, and not to give vent to any spleen against Father Patuzzi.

I have had no news yet of the *Spouse* or of the hundred other *Apologies*. Considering the heavy snow storms we have been having here, the books were, perhaps, detained at Manfredonia.

I learn with pleasure that you will soon finish the works of Benedict XIV. and those of Noris.

I have returned a book which was given me to read, entitled: "Christian Confidence". It is published in *duodecimo*, and is of the same style as my *Preparation for Death*. If I mistake not, it was printed at Venice. I have had search made for it in Naples, but it has not been found. Have the kindness, to see if the work can be procured in Venice, and send it to me with the bill of costs.

With the deepest respect, I subscribe myself, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 170.

To the Same.

He requests the publisher to purchase a work for him.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, [January] 27, 1766.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have just learned that Manfrè has printed at Venice a work in two or three volumes, quarto, composed by Father Valzetti,[1] entitled: "The Foundations of the Christian Religion, and the Sources of Impiety." Please purchase a copy for me from Signor Manfredi. It will prove very serviceable by giving me valuable points for the work I am at this moment composing against materialists and deists.

No more at present. I answered your last letter a short time ago.

With sentiments of profound respect, I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

[1] Antonio Valsecchi, of the Order of St, Dominic, was born at Verona, in 1708. Amongst other works, he had published, in 1764, at Padua, by Giovanni Manfrè, "The Foundations of Religion and the Sources of Impiety", in three volumes.

LETTER 171.

To the Same.

Details concerning the work, entitled: *The Truths of Faith.*—The holy Doctor asks an important service of Remondini.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, February 5, 1766.

Most Illustrious Sir: The present letter is an answer to your favor of the 18th of January. Once more, I say I am very much consoled to hear that you will soon finish the works of Benedict XIV. and those of Noris.

As soon as I have printed my work against modern errors, I shall send you a number of copies. But I must have the book printed first at Naples, principally because I am afraid the original might be lost on the way to you, a thing by no means impossible. I would not like to begin this work again, as it has proved an immense task. It is a long time since I began writing the book, in preparation for which I read innumerable volumes. In the second place, I must necessarily revise the proof-sheets repeatedly, adding many things and eliminating others, the matter treated being a delicate one, every word of which is of sovereign importance. I should certainly prefer, my dear Sir, to confide to you the first printing, but for the reasons just mentioned, it is altogether impossible. I shall, however, have only a few copies printed here, and if I do undertake myself the first printing of my books, it is only that others may print them after that. Nor is this a book that our incompetent publishers at Naples will ever print. No, as soon as it is finished, I shall forward it to you.

I must tell you that I require some time before printing the book, as a great part of it has yet to be written. *Apropos* of this, I requested you, in my last letter, to send me from Venice the work of Father Valzetti, or Vasecchi, entitled: "The Foundations of the Christian Religion", printed by Manfrè in three volumes, quarto. As this publication may prove useful to me for the book in question, please have the kindness to forward it to me as soon as possible with the price indicated.

Works of the kind I am now engaged upon, require much clearness. I have read many treating of this subject, all of which, however, were most obscure. But having shown the first sheets of my volume to several persons, they assure me that great clearness pervades the latter. I am, therefore, anxious to compose this work that, by irrefutable arguments, I may disabuse the unhappy victims of their error.

It is really too bad, the transporting of books from Venice to Naples. Just think, I have not yet had any news of your *Spouses* or of the one hundred extra *Apologies*. The vessel has certainly foundered.

It is now two or three weeks since I sent you, through Signor Moschini, a copy of my book on the Probable Opinion, reprinted here with a new arrangement and enriched with numerous additions. Write me a word on this subject, for, in case the copy has not reached you, I shall forward another.

I hear that the *Apology* has been received with much favor at Rome.

You will soon print, I am told, the *Moral* of Father Patuzzi. If there is nothing in the way, I should like to have the folios as quickly as they issue from the press. I say, *if there is nothing in the way*, for I do not wish to dictate. If it can be done, I shall be much pleased.

With sentiments of deepest respect, I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 172.

To the Same.

He indicates a plan for sending the work of Father Valsecchi, and speaks about a few of his own works.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, February 18, 1766.

Most Illustrious Sir: I write again to ask you to procure as soon as possible from Signor Manfrè in Venice the work which the Dominican Father Valsecchi, or Valsetti (I do not know which), has published in three volumes, quarto. It is entitled: "Foundations of the Christian Religion". A good part of my book in refutation of materialists and deists is already completed, but I cannot commence the printing before I examine this work published by Manfrè.

Send the copy along with any other volumes you may be forwarding to one of the booksellers of Naples. I do not yet know whether the *Spouses* and the extra *Apologies* have even arrived at Manfredonia. This prolonged dearth of news makes me fear that they are detained somewhere. Please instruct your agent to procure information on the subject from the master of the bark, and to inquire to whom he consigned the packet. It is this delay that has led me to request you to transmit the work published by Manfrè, through the medium of some bookseller of Naples.

Tell me the name of the latter. I have no desire to wait five or six months as in the case of the *Spouses*, of which I have not yet heard a single word.

I have just received your very esteemed letter, by which I see that my new work on the Probable Opinion has not yet reached you.

In a few days I shall forward to you another ascetical work of mine, containing meditations and devout practices.[1] This new book is intended principally for the ecclesiastics of my diocese; nevertheless, the public will receive it, I trust, with favor, as it is replete with useful matter, and therefore serviceable to every class of people. As usual, I am having a small number of copies printed. As soon as finished, I shall forward it to you.

I beg you to write to Signor Moschini, and tell him to forward to you the books I send; for, if I am to believe my agent at Naples, he receives them with a bad grace.

Once more, please hasten to send me as soon as possible the work published by Manfrè.

My book against materialists will effect much good, I trust. True, there are many books already published treating on this subject; but they are either very diffuse or very obscure, and difficult to understand at first sight. For myself, I aim particularly at writing so clearly that everybody can understand me. I have been assured that my works have some merit in this, that the most difficult points are explained with clearness.

There is no need of my mentioning to you with what impatience the public are waiting for the new edition of the *Moral*.

Let me know, I pray, whether you have commenced to print the *Moral* of Father Patuzzi, a book calculated to

[1] "The Way of Salvation, or Meditations and Pious Practices for acquiring Eternal Salvation."

cast all Christendom into despair. I am aware that it is you who are printing it.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 173.

To the Same.

He informs him of the sending of a book and a remittance of money.

Live Jesus and Mary!

[ARIENZO, March, 1766.]

Most Illustrious Sir: I have given orders to my agent at Naples to forward to you, through Signor Moschini, the ascetical work I have composed under the title: *Way of Salvation.*

Enclosed I send you a small sum of money accruing from the sale of your books. I do not know the exact amount, but my secretary will indicate it at the end of the letter. I am well aware that it is small, but have patience: only by degrees can I dispose of your books among the clergy of my diocese. But enough on this point. I shall forward the money to you just as it accrues from the sale.

I am awaiting the work of Father Valsecchi published by Signor Manfrè. The fishes must have devoured the *Spouses* and the one hundred new *Apologies*, for I have received no news of them. Ask information from the

people of the bark, and inquire to whom the copies were consigned.

I remain,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] We are sending you seven ducats and a half, of the money of the kingdom.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 174.

To the Same.

He thanks the publisher for a service rendered, and requests him to state the precise time at which he will be able to commence the new edition of the *Moral.*—Details concerning his work against materialists.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, March 19, 1766.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received the note you sent me, in which the master of the bark acknowledges the receipt of the two works in question. I will take care to procure them through Signor Matteo Ernandez, as soon as they arrive. I have advised him of the fact.

I am very thankful to you for presenting me with these two books, though somewhat grieved also. In future I shall be unable to recur to you for any books I may need. Enough, however. I thank you for your great kindness. Let this be the arrangement for the future: you will send me the bill for all books I shall request, even the smallest.

I announced to you in my last, that I was forwarding seven ducats and a half, accruing from the sale of your

books. I have just learned that there is here another small sum due you from the same source. As soon as the amount is increased, I shall send it to you.

I understand perfectly well that you cannot commence work on the reprinting of the *Moral* before your celebrated editions of the works of Benedict XIV. and of Noris are completed. I flattered myself with the hope that these editions would be finished in a few months. But if I mistake not, they are not yet out of press, or else you would have apprised me that the reprinting of my work had been begun. My only request now is, that you tell me sincerely how long it will take to complete the reprinting of the works you have on hand. Will it be four, five, or six months? You can easily tell, judging from the amount that remains to be printed. I want to know that I may communicate your answer to all who are waiting for this revised edition of my *Moral*. I shall, then, deceive them no longer. For some time I have been warding them off with promises. If you inform me, it will be five or six months, or longer, I shall tell them that, and they will cease tormenting me.

I repeat, you are perfectly right in finishing these editions first. They are too important to be abandoned or suffer interruption. But I beg you to tell me exactly when you can have them completed.

Nothing more at present. Please accept the expression of profound respect with which I subscribe myself, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] As soon as I have received the work of Father Valsecchi, I shall endeavor to finish my book against materialists, a good part of which I have already completed. When the volume is finished, I shall send it to you. Who knows, my dear Sir, but that the same may

happen to this book as to the *Apology*, namely, that you will have to do me the favor of printing and publishing the first edition. I say this, because they have given me for censor a certain person whose opinions are not in accord with mine. He is a friend of Patuzzi, and that says everything.

If I perceive that he and I cannot come to an agreement, I shall have a very small number of copies printed here privately. They will serve as the original, and you will do me the favor of publishing the work.

There is no possibility of my sending the manuscript covered as it is with innumerable notes. When I am revising the proof-sheets of these doctrinal works, I make so many eliminations, and introduce so many additions that I change, so to speak, the half of the volume. This will surely be the case with the book in question. I shall have to revise the proof-sheets, perhaps, two or three times.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 175.

To the Same.

He again requests the publisher to inform him when he will commence the printing of the *Moral.*

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, April 8, 1766.

Most Illustrious Sir: I reply to your favor of the 29th of March.

I have twice written to Signor Ernandez, requesting him to be on the lookout for the work of Valsecchi and the *Spouses*, but as yet I have received no news of their arrival. I hope there has been no new delay at Chioggia.

I am now clear on the subject of Father Patuzzi's *Moral.* With regard to the reprinting of my *Moral*, I know it

would be out of place for me to require you to interrupt the reprinting of the important writings of Benedict XIV. and of Cardinal Noris, to begin work on my book. I only wish to renew the request I made to you in my last letter, namely, that you advise me, when an opportunity offers, how many months, more or less, you will need to finish these works. I can then inform those who desire the new edition of my *Moral.*

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grâteful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 176.

To the Same.

He informs him of the arrival of the books for which he had been so anxiously waiting.

Live Jesus and Mary!

ARIENZO, May 12, 1766.

Most Illustrious Sir: Thanks be to God, the *Spouses* and the *Apologies* have arrived at Naples, also the packet containing Valsecchi's and the other work.

For weeks I had been most anxious, for Signor Ernandez had written to me that the master of the bark, Francesco Padoano, had come into port, but had not consigned anything to him. Soon, however, the books arrived at Naples, and I had them secured. How this happened, I know not.

July is approaching. I hope you will then begin the reprinting of my *Moral.*

I am sending you a new addition. Have it carefully pre-

served. It would be well to insert it immediately at the page where it belongs.

I conclude, once more subscribing myself, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 177.

To Canon Giuseppe Simioli, Lector of Theology, in the Royal University of Naples.

Observations relative to the revision of a book.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, May 18, 1766.

Most Illustrious Sir: Numbers of works, as voluminous as learned, have been written against the errors of Materialism and Deism, errors nowadays very much in vogue. For a long time past I have been occupied in making a compendium of the most striking points and most decisive arguments contained in these books. The result is a volume which is now almost completed.

I have the honor of informing you that you have been appointed by the royal government to revise this work, and I hold in my possession the commission to that effect.

I shall not send you the original manuscript, but simply transmit to you the proofs, a few at a time. I shall order the printer to put them to press only after having attended to the corrections you may judge necessary.

Should there be question of any suppression or alteration of importance, you will be so kind, my dear Sir, as to inform me. I shall then try to conform myself as much as possible to what you shall indicate. But I trust,

this will rarely occur. What I have written, I have selected from the best modern authors, who have within a few years treated this subject, such as Hooke,[1] Doctor of the Sorbonne, Father Moniglia,[2] and a number of others. I have especially drawn from the celebrated work of Father Valsecchi, printed lately at Piacenza, and entitled: "Demonstration of the Principles of Faith", also from the "Metaphysics", published recently by Genovesi.

I wished to mention these points to you in time, as I shall begin soon to forward the proofs. I shall, however, send but a single folio at a time. You can thus render me the service in question without much trouble to yourself.

I conclude, subscribing myself, Most Illustrious and Reverend Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original in the possession of Cavaliere Giancarlo Rossi at Rome.

1 Lucius Joseph Hooke, a native of Ireland and Doctor of the Sorbonne, published a number of works, among them: "Religionis naturalis revelatæ et catholicæ principia." 2 vol. Paris, 1754.

2 Tommaso Vincenzo Moniglia, a Dominican of Florence, published in 1750 a work, entitled: "Materialists and Other Unbelievers Refuted," 2 vol.—In 1760, he published at Lucca another work, entitled: "Critico-Philosophical Observations against Materialists."

LETTER 178.

To Signor Giambattista Remondini.

Plan to be followed in sending the proof-sheets of the coming edition of the *Moral*. — Remarks about several works.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, June 22, 1766.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received your esteemed letter. From it I learn that you have almost completed the reprinting of the works of the Pope [Benedict XIV.] and those of Noris. I hope soon to hear that you have begun work on the *Moral*.

I had desired at first, as I mentioned to you, to receive the folios of this new edition one after the other, and you very kindly offered to send them in that way. But I cannot think of any way by which they may reach me just as they issue from the press. To forward them by post, would entail too much expense on us both. As regards sending them *via* Manfredonia, I must inform you that Signor D. Matteo Ernandez is tired of receiving your commissions, as he declared to me in a letter. After the bark of Master Padoano arrived, I wrote repeatedly to Ernandez about Valsecchi's book. He answered at first that the vessel had, indeed, come into port, but that it had brought nothing for me. Then, in another letter, he wrote that the packet containing Valsecchi's book had been consigned to him, adding that he no longer wished to receive from you such commissions.

It would be better, therefore, to transmit the folios to your friend, Signor Onorio Noe, through whom I have already received the *Spouses* and the extra *Apologies*. It would, also, be preferable, I think, to send the work volume by volume; for to send it sheet by sheet, would

entail too much inconvenience for you who have so much business on hand.

With regard to the copies of the *Spouse*, which you forwarded to me, I have sent orders to Naples to have them sold among the monasteries. But as there was an edition printed at Naples only a short time ago, he to whom I entrusted the sale of the book, has not an extensive custom. They tell me they have been unable to dispose of them.

I should like very much to oblige you as you deserve, but I know not how. The nuns in the monasteries of my diocese provided themselves with the book some time ago. I intend to see, as I have already intimated, whether Father Ferrara will be able to discover some means of selling these copies. If he cannot, then we shall have to give them to some publisher to sell, that they may not remain hidden away until moth-eaten. I shall see what is best to do in the matter.

I am disposing of copies of the *Homo Apostolicus* and the *Guide for Confessors*, but only little by little. I am having the students and seminarians procure copies, according as those young men begin the course of studies.

The *Homo Apostolicus* would certainly have been adopted in many seminaries, but behold, Antoine [1] appeared. It is an absurd work, altogether useless for young men, since it is absolutely insufficient for instructing them to hear confessions; but as it follows the System of Concina and Patuzzi, to be in fashion, people are calling for it.

My volume against materialists and deists is being printed.

I have examined the whole of Valsecchi's work. It is very learned and elaborate, and I have made some extracts from it. I think, however, that my volume, besides being

[1] Paul Gabriel Antoine, S. J., a Rigorist author, wrote the "Theologia moralis complectens omnia morum præcepta, etc."

much shorter, will prove much more useful, as it is more concise, costs less, and comprises what is best in Valsecchi and in many other works. As I wrote to you, I am having only a small number of copies printed.

When you commence printing the *Moral*, advise me of it, as well for my own satisfaction as that I may be able to announce the fact to my friends.

With sentiments of deepest respect, I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 179.

To the Same.

He fears some misfortune has happened, not having received a reply for a long time.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

SANT' AGATA, September 12, 1766.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have been waiting long for a letter from you. Almost three months have passed, and not a word of news. Some time ago I wrote informing you that I had been afflicted with a serious attack of illness, and had received all the sacraments. With God's help, however, my health has been restored.

In the same letter, I asked for news of your health, and also, if I mistake not, about the reprinting of the *Moral;* but so far I have received no answer.

All this makes me fear some misfortune. I beg you, therefore, to tell me how you are. If (which would grieve me very much) the Lord should have called to the other life Signor D. Giovanni Battista, with whom I have so long

been connected in business relations, I beg his sons or his heirs to write at once and inform me of everything; for I have on hand many books sent me by Signor D. Giovanni Battista to have sold. I am united to you in a community of interests, and I have already in hand a certain sum of money accruing from the sale of books.

I might also forward another short note destined for the new edition of the *Moral*. It belongs only at the end of the work. But I do not send it, not knowing to whom to address it; in fact, I cannot tell whether my letters are received or not.

With sentiments of profound respect, I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] Address your letters merely *Naples*, not *Sant' Agata via Naples*.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 180.

To the Same.

He asks for copies of a certain work.—He fears some trouble from the censors of his volume against materialists.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, November 19, 1766.

Most Illustrious Sir: Your letter of the 1st instant gave me much satisfaction, containing, as it did, the information that you had commenced printing the new *Moral*, a work so impatiently longed for by many.

I hold here some money due to you from the sale of books, but I am waiting to collect more before forwarding it to you.

I beg you to have your workmen examine whether there are in your establishment any more copies of a small volume of mine, entitled: *Meditations for a Retreat of Eight Days, with Reflections on the Passion of Jesus Christ.* You printed it some years ago. If any copies remain, I should be very grateful for a couple of hundred, and the bill of costs.

My volume against materialists, deists, etc., is progressing. The third part only remains to be printed. I am afraid, however, this latter will bring me into difficulty with my Neapolitan censors.[1] Toward the end of it are two chapters in which I defend the superiority of the Pope over Councils, and his infallibility in all definitions of Faith. Now, as the French teaching is the fashion these days, I fear that some partisans of the *faction* [2] will raise objection. If I meet opposition, I shall send you the work, especially the two chapters in question that you may print it in its entirety.

What miserable times are these, in which one is not allowed to defend the authority of our common Father, the Vicar of Jesus Christ! May God have pity on us!

I beg you to inform me from time to time, how far the reprinting is advancing. Ask of me any favor you may choose, as I am desirous of obliging you.

1 These two censors were Don Giovanni Battista Gori, ecclesiastical censor, and Don Giuseppe Simioli, government censor. Both gave their approbation to the work, but the one only on the 1st of May, 1767, the other on the 26th of the same month, that is to say, after a delay of six full months. One can understand that the saint should more than once complain of this delay.

2 This term was applied to the Jansenists.

With sentiments of profound esteem, I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and obedient servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 181.

To the Same.

His desire to rewrite the index of the *Moral Theology*.—Zeal of the saint in defence of the infallibility of the Pope.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

[December, 1766.]

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received your very esteemed letter, and to my great satisfaction I learn that the reprinting is going on. It is sufficient that it is going on; for in these bad times it cannot make much progress.

When the first volume is finished, do not neglect to send it to me as quickly as possible, for I am thinking of undertaking a great work in connection with the *Moral* now in press, namely, the rewriting of the index found at the end of the work. The numerous editions of this *Theology* have led to so many changes in the paragraphs, and the numbering of the latter has become so confused that I might almost say not a single citation is any longer correctly numbered.

I see very well that this revision of the index will cost me much labor; but God will grant me, I trust, life and strength to perform this work, which is absolutely indis-

pensable. The index, as it now stands, will discredit the work, or, at least, will tire the patience of the poor reader. However, to accomplish the revision, I must have at hand the volumes of the *Moral* just as soon as they issue from the press. Meantime, I shall commence the work as best I can.

I am waiting to receive the two hundred *Meditations*, *etc.*, as soon as the first occasion of sending them by vessel offers. Do not forget to address them to Signor Oronzio, since Signor Ernandez has declared that he does not wish to be annoyed any longer with them.

The printing of the third part of the work against materialists has been commenced; but it contains the last two chapters. There's the difficulty! What misery! Formerly, and even in my own time, to assert that the Pope was fallible, and that his authority was inferior to that of Councils, would have aroused horror; but now they go so far as to doubt whether it is permissible to write that the Pope is infallible and superior to Councils.

I hope my censors will be ashamed to cancel from my work these two propositions so sacred and inviolable. Should they, however, suppress them, I shall omit from my book the two chapters in question, which have cost me such labor, and send you the complete manuscript.

It is true that Venice is now following the fashion of the hour, but not with so great attachment to the Gallican propositions as exists here at Naples. I hold for certain that your censors will not make like trouble; for I am at this moment reading the "Dissertations" published lately by Father Zaccaria, and in them the Gallican doctrines are openly combated.

I send you enclosed several minor additions destined

for the *Moral*. Have them inserted at their respective places, that they may not be lost.

With deepest respect, I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 182.

To the Same.

He requests the publisher to inform him of the receipt of a very important letter containing a *Dissertation* on the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, February 20, 1767.

Most Illustrious Sir: I send you enclosed a new note destined for the second volume. I beg you once more to inform me as soon as you have received my letter containing the three folios treating on the important subject of Confirmation. I have asked this favor before, and I now ask it again; so that, if the printer has reached this subject, you will please delay the printing, until I rewrite the folios treating the question,[1] and am able to forward them to you.

What I have said, I shall do, in case my letter together with the folios goes astray on the route, as has happened many a time. Such a misfortune would, indeed, cause me much pain; however, I should have to resign myself to the task of recommencing the *Dissertation*, the subject treated being a very important one, as I mentioned to you lately. Authors have written whole volumes on the question, and

[1] The saint here alludes to the *Dissertation* on the matter and form of the Sacrament of Confirmation, which was added to the *Theology*, lib. vi. n. 164.

on my treatise on the subject, I have labored for an entire month, trying to be brief and, at the same time, to say all that was necessary. Many will, perhaps, procure the work solely to study this question and the arguments with which, after much difficulty, I settled it.

Please then, I repeat, answer me at once. I await your response with impatience, as I have received no letter from you for a long time.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 183.

To the Same.

He asks for news of the *Dissertation on Confirmation*.—New work he intends sending to the publisher.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, March 7, 1767.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received your esteemed favor of the 21st of February. I have not been relieved of my fear that you will not receive my second letter, which I confided to the post, and which contained the folios of my *Dissertation on Confirmation*. I should be very much chagrined were this letter lost *en route*, as I should be obliged to begin the work anew.

I beg you, then, to send me word as soon as you receive my letter with the accompanying folios. You should certainly have received them one week, or, at most, two weeks after my sending them. If, after three or four weeks, you see no sign of their arrival, inform me, and I shall resign myself with patience to the task of rewriting the *Dissertation*.

I. hope by Easter to have finished my book against unbelievers, if, indeed, the censors do me the favor of examining it. As soon as it is completed, I shall send it to you.

I am thankful to you for having forwarded the two hundred copies of the *Meditations*. I shall take care to have them secured as soon as they arrive at the custom-house.

With regard to the *Index*, I have already marked on slips the corrections I shall have to make. Nothing remains for me to note, save what pertains to the first volume, in which the order of the paragraphs has been changed, especially in the treatise on *Conscience* and that on *Human Acts*. By reason of these changes, I am unable to make the necessary corrections, until I have in my hands this first volume. I am expecting it from Signor Moschini.

When you write to me, please state how far Father Patuzzi's *Moral* is advanced.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 184.

To the Same.

He sends some additions for insertion in the *Moral*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, March 18, 1767.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received your favor of the 7th instant, and to my great satisfaction I learned that you re-

ceived the folios on Confirmation. I thank you for having seen to their insertion at the places in which they belong.

I send you enclosed a new little slip, which will surely arrive in time. Please have it inserted in its proper place.

As regards the *Notice to the Reader*, to which you allude, I shall conform to your wishes. For the present, I am unable to compose it. I have been feeling unwell for the past seven or eight days. I am still confined to my bed, although, as the doctors assure me, the malady is not dangerous. As soon as my heads permits, I shall write the *Notice*. At any rate, this *Notice* is to be inserted at the beginning of the work, and, therefore, there is no question of printing it before the whole book is completed.

As I understand, you have already reached the second volume. The printing of the first is, therefore, finished, or nearly so. Do not forget, I pray, to send it to me as soon as it is finished, for without it I cannot forward to you the changes to be introduced into the *General Index*.

As soon as I have finished my book against unbelievers, entitled: *The Truths of Faith*, I shall forward it to you.

I am on the lookout for the two hundred copies.

Please tell me how far Father Patuzzi's work is advanced. People say that he has died, but I do not believe it.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] Thanks to God's goodness, my health is restored, and I have been able to compose the *Monitum typographi ad lectorem*, or the new *Notice to the Reader* upon the special value conferred on this latest edition by its fresh additions, explanations, and new treatises. I now send you this *Monitum*. In my opinion, it could not be better,

for in a few words it contains all that has to be said.[1] Underneath the *Monitum* I have indicated where and how to insert it. I have, also, jotted down some few arrangements to be introduced in the two preceding *Notices*.

I send you, also, another small slip destined for the third volume. Its place is in the treatise *De Censuris*.

I beg you to acknowledge at once the receipt of this letter, for in case it should go astray, I shall send a second copy of all the enclosed additions.

I urge most strongly on you to have two persons compare at the same time the numbers of the citations, for the reviser, when alone, cannot distinguish errors.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

[1] The translation of this *Monitum* is as follows:

Notice to the Reader.

"This, the sixth edition of the present work, has many claims on the kind attention of the reader. Many improvements have been introduced. He will find in it clearer explanations on divers points, new questions treated, and certain decisions modified after most careful consideration. He will meet with several treatises and much important matter not contained in the preceding editions, which serve to make the work as complete as possible. All these emendations have been transmitted to us by letter by the Author himself, who resides at a distance from here. If, then, this work, which has already passed through five editions, has been received with favor, and has even travelled outside of Europe, has everywhere met with general approval, with much more reason may a like success be predicted of an edition which the Author himself has, after careful examination, enlarged and amended."

LETTER 185.

To a Father of the Congregation, at Pagani.

He sends him two works.—His opinion concerning Probabilism and the authority of the Pope.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, March 28, 1767.

I send you the little book of Father Tortora on *Confession*, which I received last evening. I have read it through, but in a cursory manner. Tell Signor Abate Tortora that the book is a good one, and pleases me. In regard to the system, I am a Probabiliorist,[1] not a Tutiorist. I am a Probabiliorist like the author of the work; for where the opinion in favor of the law is undoubtedly *more probable*, I affirm that one is not allowed to follow the *less probable* opinion favoring liberty. He who asserts that of two equally probable opinions one must choose the more sure, is no longer a Probabiliorist, but a Tutiorist. The book in question is, indeed, a good one, and would to God its teaching were practised! There can be no question that the Tutiorists with their Rigorous System, are doing a great deal of harm; whilst, on the other hand, the Proba-

[1] This is not the only letter in which the saint declares himself a Probabiliorist. It is needles to add that this expression must not be taken here in the strict signification in which it is generally employed in the schools. To do this, would be attributing to the saint's words a meaning he never intended. The holy Doctor made use of this word in order to give stronger expression to his opiniou on the subject of Probabilism, and to declare, without leaving room for mistaking his meaning, that when a person has before him two opinions, one of which, favoring the law, is *for a certainty* more probable, and the other, in favor of liberty, is less probable, he must follow the former. In his letter to Father Blasucci of the 4th of August, 1772 (given later on in this *Correspondence*), the saint himself explains in what sense he is a Probabiliorist.

bilists (I mean those who follow the opinion recognized as the *less probable* one, which, in my opinion, is not at all probable, since in that case the law is morally promulgated), the Probabilists, I say, cause the ruin of a great number of souls. The laxist confessors are certainly more numerous than the rigorist.

I have been unable to find the passage in which the author affirms that the use of the Probable Opinion has been interdicted by the decree of the bishop of Trent and by the Holy Office.

I have discovered the place in which the author takes me to task for the *Rule of Life* which I traced for the religious who would lead a perfect life. According to him, this rule leads to consumption. But he has lost sight of what I lay down in the very beginning: that these various exercises might be followed, provided they are prejudicial neither to the health, nor to the particular duties of the religious, and that nothing should be done, save with the advice of the director and the Abbess, when there is question of exterior exercises.

I also send you the work of Signor Romano. This work is a very learned one; nevertheless, paragraph iv. of chapter iii. is most dangerous, and I cannot understand how Mgr. Borgia has allowed its publication. The author protests that he does not hold the opinion, that a Council is superior to the Pope, though, in reality, he makes the Pope subject to a Council; for he affirms that the Pope cannot dispense from the canons of a Council without a necessary cause, and when he does dispense, he must indicate his reason for doing so, and show clearly that it is a just one. Behold, then, the Pope made subject to the canons of a Council! It is on this very account that the work has been so much applauded by the Jansenists, who have sent for it from France, and received it with joyous welcome.

Unfortunate power of the Pope! How thou art being

trodden under foot, even by Catholic Italians! O Lord, come to our assistance!

I am sending you the two volumes of Bonetti,[1] of which I have no longer any need.

Tell me how Don Giovanni[2] is getting along. I embrace and bless your Reverence, as also Father Vicar,[3] and all the rest.

I have been ailing for the last twelve days, and more than one aspirant has bestirred himself not a little to obtain my bishopric. A fine tribute to me that so many people are anxious for my death! The Pope, however, seems to be in no hurry to please either them or me.

BROTHER ALFONSO MARIA,
of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] Note down five Masses which I have not said.

After the original in the possession of the lawyer Giuseppe Tortora at Pagani (Province of Salerno).

LETTER 186.

To Signor Giambattista Remondini.

He requests more exact information in regard to the receipt of folios transmitted.—Recommendations relative to the *Index* and the summary of chapters of the *Moral*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, April 8, 1767.

Most Illustrious Sir: With lively pleasure I read your letter of March 26, and learned that you had received the folios despatched in my letter of March 7.

A single difficulty remains. In this letter of March 26, you tell me that you have received *the folios of additions and corrections relative to the subject of Confirmation.*

1 See *General Correspondence* vol. ii. p. 203.

2 Father Mazzini.

3 Father Andrea Villani.

The folios treating on this subject I sent you some time previously. Moreover, in a preceding communication, dated March 7, you announced the receipt of the writings on *Confirmation*, contained in my letter of February 6. I am, therefore, led to think that it is by mistake you wrote me that you had received the folios treating on the Sacrament of Confirmation in my letter of March 7; because in that letter I really enclosed certain additions bearing on a different subject, I mean, the minister of the Sacrament of Matrimony and divers other points. In that letter I transmitted to you, also, the *Notice to the Reader*, in which I enumerated the advantages of this latest edition of the *Moral*. The wording of the *Notice* appears to me quite perfect.

In your last letter of March 26, you make no allusion to this *Notice;* nevertheless, from comparison of the dates of your letters, I conclude that you have received the *Notice* as well as all the last additions, concerning whose fate I was so anxious.

As regards the *Index*, I have composed the folio-sheet, that is, I have indicated the numerous arrangements to be introduced; but, I must repeat once more, I cannot finish the task before I receive a copy of the first volume, as the pages and marginal numbers have undergone a change, more especially in the two treatises on *Conscience* and *Human Acts*. I hope, however, to receive this volume in due time by the bark. The passage by sea is now quite easy, spring having arrived.

I request you to have the following short paragraph read to the reviser.

I have discovered in the preceding edition, if I mistake not, that the summary contained many numbers which do not at all correspond to the marginal numbers contained in the body of chapters and questions treated. The reviser should, therefore, pay close attention to this matter, and take care that the propositions enunciated and developed

in the text tally exactly with the numbers of the summary.

Father Patuzzi seems to be trying to make Moral Theology as strict as possible. He will have to hunt for people to observe his teaching.

To relieve my anxiety, please state more clearly whether you have received the last additions I sent, together with the *Monitum* or *Notice to the Reader*.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 187.

To the Same.

He sends the folio necessary for the completion of the new edition of the *Moral*.—Final recommendations relative to this edition.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, May 17, 1767.

Most Illustrious Sir: The enclosed sheet will, I trust, free you from all anxiety and fear of not being able to publish the new edition of the *Moral*, on account of having to wait for the *Index* I corrected, a correction made in accordance with the new proof-sheets. I, too, foresaw that there would be some delay. Those miserable vessels seem never to reach Manfredonia, and when, at last, they do arrive, we must wait until the printed copies pass to the custom-house at Naples!

On the enclosed sheet I have written all that has to be inserted in the *Index*. Nothing more remains for me to add.

With regard to the new treatises, I mean those on *Conscience* and *Human Acts*, I have marked down what should be inserted relative to them in the *Index*. I was unable to indicate the numbers, as I did not have the folios at hand; however, your skillful and intelligent reviser will easily understand how to place them, consulting the compositor for that purpose.

I have marked in the *Index* certain words written in capitals. At these places, a number of fresh points will have to be introduced, in addition to what already stands there. Some of these words you must change entirely, and substitute what I have marked in the folio.

Give the folio in question to the reviser. He will have no difficulty in understanding it, as I have endeavored to indicate everything as clearly as possible.

My work against unbelievers is completed. I am now seeking to procure the approbation from the censors. God knows how long they have been keeping me waiting!

Relieve my suspense, by sending me word, as soon as you receive the enclosed sheet relative to the *Index*. When you write to me, give me some news of the Jesuits, [1] and of affairs at Rome; for you are better informed at Venice than we here at Naples.

With sentiments of deepest respect, I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

[1] On the 2d of April, 1767, Charles III. banished from his kingdom and from all territories subject to Spain the members of the Society of Jesus, to the number of about six thousand. For more about this unhappy event see vol. ii. *General Correspondence*, p. 212, note.

LETTER 188.

To Father Andrea Villani.

He presents a clear explanation of his System of Probabilism, for the guidance of his Congregation.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, May 25, 1767.

In the matter of Probabilism, I hold two things for certain.

The first, in opposition to Father N., is, that a person may certainly follow the probable opinion in favor of liberty, when it is equally probable with the contrary opinion, or when the probability is so little less that one doubts whether the opinion in question is equally or a little less probable than the opinion favoring the law.

I affirm, on the other hand, and I hold for certain, that a person is not allowed to follow the opinion in favor of liberty when that opinion is surely *less probable*, and the other favoring the law surely *more probable*. The reason is that when the opinion in favor of the law shows itself as surely *more probable*, it is a sign that this opinion is considerably *more probable* and to a degree preponderating. Now, when the opinion in favor of the law is considerably *more probable* and to a degree preponderating, even our Probabilist authors affirm that the opinion favoring the law has to be followed, because the law is then sufficiently promulgated, at least morally. To wish in that case to follow the mild opinion, is, it seems, to act imprudently and against the known truth.

I have desired to write all this to your Reverence, because Father N. has raised certain difficulties against me. He wished, indeed, to maintain that it is certainly allowed to follow the opinion in favor of liberty, even when one recognizes it to be certainly *less probable*. I have replied

to him at length, and finally I wrote to him that, if I feel a scruple to grant the faculty of hearing confessions to the priest that follows the system of N., I should also scruple to accord that faculty to any member of our Congregation who would wish to follow the opinion recognized by him as certainly *less probable*. I then told him to make these my sentiments known to all the confrères in his locality. I now request your Reverence to do the same to all our brethren in the kingdom.

I am not speaking of particular opinions. As regards them, each one guides himself according to his own conscience. I allude to the general System, which I desire the brethren to adopt, in order that they may not follow a veritable Laxism.

I beg your Reverence to acknowledge the receipt of this letter, and let me know whether you have begun to inform the others of this matter.

I bless you, etc.

After the Roman edition.

LETTER 189.

To Signor Giambattista Remondini.

He sends the publisher his work against materialists.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

AIROLA, June 18, 1767.

Most Illustrious Sir: My work against materialists is, at last, completed.

I have had a copy bound in very simple style, in small boards, and have already sent orders to Naples to send it to Signor Moschini, that he may forward it to you. In it, I enclosed quite a number of small additions containing important matter.

The work has not yet been published; but from what

has been told me by friends who have read it, I trust it will prove acceptable to all. I have endeavored to collect therein all that other authors have said on the subject. This I have done very clearly, as those who have read the book assure me. The volume in question has cost me two years of labor during these latter days, not to speak of the researches I made at an earlier date.

I should like to know how far the reprinting of the *Moral* is advanced.

I hope that by this time you have received my manuscript relative to the additions to the *General Index*. In case it should go astray on the way, I have preserved a copy. Write me word, then, I beg you, as soon as you receive the manuscript.

I remain, as ever, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 190.

To the Same.

Despatch of the work against unbelievers.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

AIROLA, June 18, 1767.

Most Illustrious Sir: I forward to you my work against unbelievers. I have already sent you notice in a letter sent by post.

Remark to those about you, that within its pages, there are certain small additions on points of much importance.

As soon as you receive the volume, please inform me. I remain, as ever, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 191.

To the Same.

Success of the work against unbelievers.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NAPLES, July 21, 1767.

Most Illustrious Sir: I learn from your very esteemed letter that you have sent me Father Novera's book.[1] I am delighted with the work. Errors will thus be refuted from various points of view.

Thanks be to God, my book has met great success, and has had an extensive sale here, a rare event in Naples.

I am pleased to hear that you have received the manuscript copy of the additions to be introduced into the *Index*, and I trust that you will soon receive my volume against unbelievers.

With sentiments of deepest esteem, I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

[1] He alludes to the work of Father Giov. Battista Noghera, S. J., entitled: "Reflections on the Philosophy of Wit".

LETTER 192.

To the Same.

Success of the work against infidels.—New book to be published by the saint.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NAPLES, August 18, 1767.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have learned to my great consolation that you have received the folio relative to the *Index*, as also my volume on *Faith*. The latter has had a great sale in Naples, and even from Rome many demands have come for the work. My supply will soon be exhausted, for, as I mentioned to you at first, I had only a few copies printed.

No news has as yet reached me of the two hundred small volumes. I intend to write to Signor Oronzio Noe, to find out whether he has not received them, and I intend to make inquiries at the custom-house. Do you, also, write to Signor Oronzio, and tell him to send me whatever information he can.

I am gratified to hear that the *Moral* is nearing completion. I repeat again, people are awaiting the work here with great impatience.

Thanks be to God, my health is improved. I am at present at Naples, on account of certain storms raised by the evil-minded against my Congregation.

I am just now having a new book printed, a practical *Instruction* for the faithful on the precepts of the Decalogue and on all the sacraments. When finished, I shall send you a copy.

I salute you most cordially. Please honor me now and then with a letter.

Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 193.

To the Same.

The saint's joy at the news of the completion of the printing of the *Moral* and the *Truths of Faith*.—A new work.—Favorable reception of the *Way of Salvation*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

NAPLES, September 14, 1767.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received your most welcome letter of the 5th of September, and have found therein much consoling news: the *Moral* completed and the work *on Faith* printed. Really, I am astonished that you have finished so quickly the printing of the latter work, the publication of which I have awaited for two years.

You announced, also, a present to me. I am quite embarrassed. May God reward your generosity!

Please let me know at what time you intend to send the copies to Manfredonia through Signor Oronzio Noe. Inform me, in particular, of the name of the master of the bark, for so far I have been unable to get the two hundred copies of the small work. If you remember the name of

the master to whom you confided them, please be so good as to tell me.

Yes, I shall forward to you the *Instruction* [*on the Commandments and Sacraments*], as soon as it is completed. The work is quite small, demanding at most fourteen or fifteen folios. Still, it will prove very useful, I trust; for, besides brevity, it has this advantage that, though written in a simple, familiar style, just as the people speak, it is replete with solid matter. Five folios have already been printed.

Should God grant me the time and strength, I hope to publish this winter another very useful book, entitled *Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ.*

I have not yet given up hope that you will publish the complete collection of my ascetical works.

I thank you once more, and subscribe myself, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] The way the printing of the book *on Faith* has been done, gives me much satisfaction. It is excellent.

The booksellers of Naples have already reprinted the work I sent you last, I mean the *Way of Salvation.* It is, in my opinion, very useful for all classes of people, for priests, nuns, and seculars. I use it continually, and have it always at hand.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 194.

To the Same.

About books.—The *Instruction on the Ten Commandments.* —The complete edition of ascetical writings.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

[Beginning of November, 1767.]

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received your last most welcome letter, dated the 10th of October, and I learn therefrom that you have forwarded the *Moral* and the book *on Faith* to Signor Oronzio Noe. I have made a note of the marking of the packets. I thank you once more for the thirty copies of the book *on Faith.*

I have already written to Signor Noe for the two hundred copies of the *Meditations*, but have not as yet received any answer. I shall write again for them, and also for the other works, and shall communicate to you his response.

The *Instruction* is almost finished. As soon as it is completed, I shall forward it to you. This little book is, indeed, short, but very solid. For its composition I read a number of voluminous *Instructions* already published. As these latter are too bulky and expensive, they have but a small sale and are little read. For that reason, I have labored to make my *Instruction* short and compendious. I have composed it in a manner altogether simple, such as should be used in addressing the people. The style is, therefore, entirely different from that of the book *on Faith.*

In my free moments, I am continuing the *Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ*, a good part of which is already finished.

In regard to the complete collection of my ascetical works, I am thankful to you for your kind intention to gratify my desires; however, I am afraid it will go on thus forever, a good intention on your part and a hope on mine.

But enough on this point. As soon as you have finished your most pressing obligations, do not forget this project.

With deepest respect, I subscribe myself, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 195.

To the Same.

He proposes the reprinting of the *Great Means of Prayer*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, November 7, 1767.

Most Illustrious Sir: Signor Oronzio Noe has written to me that the packet containing the two hundred *Meditations* has reached him. I am now endeavoring to discover the best means of transporting them to this place.

He writes to me that he is waiting to receive the two packets of *Morals*, the despatch of which I announced to him.

Among my publications, there is one that has met with no little favor. I mean the work *on Prayer*, a small volume, indeed, of only ten or eleven folios, but one that has cost me great labor. You have been careful to print my other works, but not this one.

Here at Naples, the edition of this work is already exhausted, in fact I have hardly a single copy. I should be very happy to see you reprint the book, for it is an elaborate one and has cost me, perhaps, two years of hard work.

I have nothing more to add. As soon as I have re-

ceived some information of the printed works sent me, I shall communicate it to you.

With sentiments of deepest esteem, I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] I shall send you the *Instruction* soon.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 196.

To the Same.

He requests the publisher to procure for him a new work of Father Patuzzi's.—Observations relative to the projected edition of the ascetical writings.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, November 16, 1767.

Most Illustrious Sir: In my last letter I informed you that Signor Oronzio Noe had received the packet containing the two hundred *Meditations*. I am every day expecting them *via* Foggia.

I have been told that Father Patuzzi has written a new *Reply* to my last work on *Probabilism*, namely: *On the Moderate Use*. They wished, it seems, to publish this *Reply* at Naples, but were unable to procure the approbation. I have been assured, also, that conjointly with the *Reply*, certain critical letters, directed against my writings, were to be published.

Now, then, since it was intended to have the *Reply* and the *Letters* appear at Naples, I conclude that they have been already published in Venice. I beg you, therefore, to procure for me, if you can, this *Reply* and the critical *Letters*, at least the *Letters;* for should I find that I have here

or there advanced an error, I shall correct it. Please have this search instituted, and inform me of the costs.

I desire now to submit to you another idea that has occured to my mind.

In the complete edition of my ascetical writings, you might, to save expense, omit the work, entitled: *The Spouse of Jesus Christ*, as also the *Exercises for Priests*. These two works are quite bulky. The one addressed to nuns has been circulated in every direction. You might, therefore, limit the collection to the small works, namely: *The Preparation for Death*, the *Visits* with the little treatises accompanying the *Glories of Mary*, the *Novena for Christmas* with the little treatises added thereto, the book *on Prayer*, the *Way of Salvation* and this latest volume I am composing, the *Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ*, which, I think, will prove more conducive to piety, and more useful than all the others together.

I have desired to impart to you my opinion in all confidence; for the rest, you may act as seems best to you.

I have nothing more to add.

With deepest respect, I subscribe myself, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 197.

To the Same.

He speaks of the sale of the *Moral*, and alludes to a new work he had written in refutation of a Gallican publication, but which he is unable to have published either at Naples or at Venice. He proposes to give it a new form and direct it against Febronius. He asks Remondini whether he will publish it.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, February 18, 1768.

Most Illustrious Sir: Thanks be to God, I am now fairly recovered from my long infirmity.

I have despatched to you through Signor Moschini the volume, entitled: *Instructions for the People*, and I am astonished that you have not yet received it. Advise me whether there is any surer way of forwarding to you than through the agency of Moschini, and I shall send another copy.

I have begun to sell some copies of the *Moral*. There are many who used frequently to ask me: *When will the Moral arrive, when will it make its appearance?* but who now have no inclination to procure a copy, either because they have lost the desire of study, or because of the misery in these parts on account of the poor harvest. But enough. I am doing my best to further the sale of the book. I am even thinking of advertising this new edition in the "Archives" of Naples, as these "Announcements" are disseminated throughout the kingdom.

There can be no question but that this latest edition is so enriched with new questions and decisions, that it would be difficult to find a *Moral* superior to it. That the old *Morals* should contain these new decisions, is an impossibility.

I requested you in a preceding letter, and I ask you

again, to send me ten or twelve copies of the little book, entitled: *Great Means of Prayer*, a work printed by you. Wait, however, until you have a chance to send other books to Naples.

With sentiments of deepest respect, I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] As you are aware, I had composed a *Refutation*, not of Carminati, but of a French work.[1] (Carminati has himself refuted the French author, and in an excellent manner, too, for which I have sent him my thanks. He has responded very kindly). My *Refutation* was, indeed, much shorter and more convincing. The Neapolitan censors, however, would not even undertake to examine it. I am, therefore, constrained to discontinue the printing, a few folios only having issued from the press. The printer himself is afraid to finish the work, on account of the present disputes between the courts of Naples and Rome.

I thought of intrusting to you the printing of this volume, which would require no more than five or six folios; but I was afraid to carry out my project, on account of the report circulated among the savans at Naples, that I was anxious

1 The French book in question appears to be the "Spirit of Gerson, or Catholic Teaching touching the Holy See", composed in the year 1692 by Eustache le Noble, Procurator at Metz, and condemned by the Sacred Congregation of the Index, on the 15th of September, 1707.—The work was also published under the title: "The Buckler of France, or the Opinions of Gerson and of Canonists relative to the Disputes between the Popes and the Kings of France." Translated into Italian under the title: "Teaching relative to the Holy See", it was condemned by the Sacred Congregation of the Index, on the 4th of July, 1765.—The work of Carminati, to which the saint here makes allusion, bears the title: "Apologetic Reflections touching the Power of the Sovereign Pontiff, a Reply to the Author of Teaching relative to the Holy See." (Venice, 1764.)

to publish the *Refutation.* If, then, they should see it arrive from Venice, even under a fictitious name, they would at once recognize it as my work. Now, at Naples they punish with extreme rigor authors who have printed outside of the kingdom a work that they have been forbidden to publish. I must, therefore, practise patience. Without doubt, my *Refutation* was very convincing.

Since you desire to have the *Instruction* translated into Latin, I shall endeavor to satisfy you, although just now I wish to commence the other book of piety, entitled, *Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ.*

I intend to collect some special and very useful matter for a new edition of the *Moral*, should there ever be one.

Amongst other appendixes that I desired to insert in my little volume on the *Power of the Pope*, a work which has met with opposition, was a short dissertation on the opinions, altogether false, that were formerly current in regard to tyrannicide. It is a useful treatise, one in which I have given the substance of all that might be said on the subject.

Had this little volume been composed sooner, I should have had it inserted in the latest edition of the *Moral;* but I wrote it only after the *Moral* was in press. Should you consent to insert it now after the *Epitome*, I shall translate it into Latin (having composed it in Italian), and shall forward it to you.

One word more. Taking it for granted that I cannot print my *Refutation* of the French author here, and that I cannot now have the same printed at your establishment (for my book being known throughout Naples, the appearance of this pamphlet would at once arouse suspicion), I have thought of composing a work in refutation of Justinus

Febronius [1] who teaches almost the same things as the French author. I should be obliged in that case to change almost entirely the volume I have already written.

Should you consent to the printing of this latter volume, I shall willingly recommence the task, even should the printing have to be done at my own expense; for I have discovered new and important matter bearing on the subject in question, which I was unable to find when I composed the book *on Faith*. I must also publish the pamphlet under an assumed name. Please write me your idea on the matter, and say whether you agree to print the book.

The work will not call for more than six or seven folios.

Tell me, also, in which language you desire to have it, in Latin or in the vernacular.

I await your reply, after which I shall begin work on the volume.

After the original preserved in the municipal library (Bertoliana) of Venice.

LETTER 198.

To the Same.

The same subject.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, March 3, 1768.

Most Illustrious Sir, I have already informed you of my desire to see printed a small volume of mine, a refutation

1 Justinus Febronius (John Nicholas de Hontheim) had published in 1763 a work, entitled: "De statu Ecclesiæ et legitima potestate Romani Pontificis liber singularis, ad reuniendos dessidentes in religione christiana compositus." This publication was placed on the Index by a Decree of February 27, 1764.

of the anonymous French author of the work, entitled: "Reflections relative to the Holy See"; but after much consideration *pro* and *con*, I have for various reasons judged best not to publish the book here at Naples, though I had everything ready for the printer.

Since I cannot publish it here in Naples, the idea has occurred to me to make of it a new work, treating on the same subject, but directed against Justinus Febronius, who writes on the same points as the French author.

I shall have to compose it in Latin, give it a form different from that of the work I had already written, and publish it under an assumed name. I am thinking of beginning this work in a few days, as I have almost completed my book, the *Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ.* In fact, the printing of the latter has been begun. As soon as it is finished, I shall forward it to you, for I shall have only a few copies printed.

The volume in refutation of Febronius will be short, at most but nine or ten folios, perhaps even less. Please tell me, as soon as possible, whether you will print this work at your establishment. Should you desire the printing to be at my expense, I consent in advance, for the book will bring great glory to God, I trust, and will promote the cause of the Church, now, as one can affirm, trodden under foot on all sides. I expect a speedy answer.

The *Moral*[1] has begun to sell. It will soon meet a more rapid sale, however, as I have had inserted in the "Announcements" a notice on this new edition and its numerous retractations, also the new treatises, additions, etc., with which it is enriched. This will prove the case especially, I believe, in those parts of the kingdom which, without such notice, would not have known of the existence of the new edition. I have thought fit to present a copy of this *Moral* to the minister that publishes these "Announcements".

[1] The sixth edition.

He would not grant permission to insert such notice before receiving a copy of the new work.

I await your reply in regard to the above-mentioned volume, and subscribe myself, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] The *Instruction* is being translated into Latin. Do you wish me to send you the translation when finished?[1]

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 199.

To the Same.

Recommendations relative to Signor Moschini.—Details concerning the refutation of Febronius.—Dissertations to be inserted in a future edition of the *Moral*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

[March, 1768.]

Most Illustrious Sir: I answer your very kind letter of March 12, from which I learn that you have despatched to me the *Instructions* and the book on *Prayer*. I thank you very much for your present of the "Philosophy of Wit"[2] and the fifty copies of the *Instruction for the People*.

The greater part of the Latin translation of the *Instruction* has been completed. When the whole is done, I shall forward it to you through Signor Moschini. In all confidence I beg you to make some small present to this gentle-

[1] This translation was afterward published under the title: "Instructio catechetica ad populum in præcepta Decalogi et Sacramenta."

[2] The work of the Jesuit Father Giov. Battista Noghera, and entitled: "Reflections on the Philosophy of Wit".

man, as he is not very friendly, and my agent at Naples has to be very careful when charging him in my name to transmit books or manuscripts. He seems to be easily irritated. On the other hand, his cooperation is indispensable, for whatever I despatch to you through him arrives punctually, and I cannot discover any other means of forwarding the works.

My dear Sir, I shall now lay aside every other occupation, and apply myself to finish the book against Febronius without delay. I shall compose it in Latin (in fact, I had already commenced to write it in that language), and I hope to be able to send it to you before beginning my diocesan Visitation. The volume will be small, not more than eight or ten folios, as I shall confine myself to the principal question, on which depend all the consequences Febronius draws therefrom. As this author is erudite and astute, the reply to his objections will, however, entail no little labor, and I shall have to weigh my words carefully.

I have commenced, in fact, I have already sketched two other little dissertations to be introduced into a new edition of the *Moral*, when it shall please God to have one appear. The one treats on *tyrannicide*, a subject so much discussed at present; the other is a brief, though elaborate dissertation in refutation of an extravagant opinion maintained by Father Patuzzi in concert with some French authors, his cousins-german, to wit, that it is never allowed to kill an aggressor, even should it be necessary in order to save one's own life. This opinion is extravagant and cruel, since it would oblige a person to permit himself to be murdered by his enemies. It is, moreover, an opinion opposed to the common teaching, and even to that of Father Concina and the partisans of the Rigorist System. But enough on this subject. I shall first finish the little volume against Febronius, to which I shall sign a fictitious name; after that I shall finish the two short dissertations

just mentioned, as also some few additions destined for the future edition of the *Moral*, when ready to appear.[1]

I shall write to Signor Oronzio Noe that the packet will soon arrive.

A good number of folios of my book, the *Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ*, are already printed, my task of composing it being accomplished. It will be favorably received by the public, and especially by nuns and other devout persons. All the virtues are discussed, and I have collected therein, not without great labor, the choicest sayings and the most shining actions of the saints.

I am standing on the verge of the grave, the shadow of death is upon me. I must hasten with my work before it arrives. Then it will be most welcome.

With deepest respect I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] Thanks be to God, since I have had the notice inserted in the "Announcements", the *Morals* have begun to sell. The misfortune is, that the people of Naples have already provided themselves with earlier editions, and they do not care to undergo a double expense. When, however, they see with what new matter this latest edition is enriched, they will, I trust, procure copies of it.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

1 These two dissertations were inserted in the seventh edition (lib. iii. tract. iv. n. 381); however, through the negligence of the editor, they were not added to the later editions. These same dissertations are found in the "Homo Apostolicus", tract. viii. cap. ii. n. 12 and 13.

LETTER 200.

To the Same.

He speaks of several works he intends to send to the publisher for printing.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, April 11, 1768.

Most Illustrious Sir: I am in receipt of your last letter. You may assure yourself, Sir, I have laid aside all other occupations, and am applying myself solely to the finishing of that little volume. You know to which one I refer. I am now well advanced in my task, though to finish the pamphlet, I must wait for a book from Rome.

I beg you not to mention me to anyone as the author of this little work; for it might involve me in difficulty, on account of the discord reigning at present between the court of Rome and that of Naples. I request you, moreover, to destroy this letter, and instruct your secretary not to mention my name to anyone.

I have confided to another, a very able Canon, the task of finishing the Latin translation of the *Instruction*, whilst I attend solely to the little work just mentioned.

Four folios of the *Practice* [1] have been printed.

If I can, I shall send you the three works together; but should this be impossible, I shall forward to you the first one finished.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

[1] "Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ.

LETTER 201.

To the Same.

He requests the publisher to eliminate a passage in the *Moral*, as a precaution against having the whole work suppressed.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, April 17, 1768.

Most Illustrious Sir: I wish to write but a few words. To my deep chagrin, I saw printed in the *Moral*, a passage which might, in these days, prove the cause of its being everywhere prohibited.

In the first volume, page 196, first column, n. 615, *Quæritur I.*, third line, these words are printed: *Possunt etiam* [*tributa imponere*] *Concilia et Pontifex, ex potestate indirecta disponendi de temporalibus, quando id opus est ad regimen spirituale.* Now, this was the common teaching when I wrote the passage, but this doctrine has since become odious in the eyes of the royalists; and if in France, and I may also add at the present moment in Spain, this party were to read the said proposition, they would certainly consign the book to the flames.

I am of opinion, therefore, that it would be expedient to change this passage, and omit those lines.[1] The reason I call your attention to this point is, because I have very much at heart that you should suffer no loss, after the expenses you have incurred in connection with the work. I am even afraid that the volume will be interdicted at Naples on account of this proposition.

When I wrote the passage in question, I had no idea of the stir which it might arouse, or I should never have written it. I am not possessed of the gift of prophecy, and

[1] The same recommendation is contained in the letter of September 7, 1772.

only now I remarked by chance and to my great distress, that this teaching was contained in the work. Act, then, as you judge best.

I am still working at the books, as I mentioned in my last letter. That circumstance, however, has given me great anxiety.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 202.

To Father Antonio Tannoia, at Iliceto.

Having heard from this Father that four propositions in the *Moral* were condemnable, he begs for more precise information on the subject.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, April 17, 1768.

Yesterday evening Father Vicar [1] read to me your letter, in which, among other things, you mentioned that the duke of Bovino had declared to you that my *Moral* contained four condemnable propositions. Not a word more do you say.

In God's name, Reverend Father, why did you not ask the duke which were those propositions, or, at least, on what subject they treated, and how he received the information. This news has upset me entirely, for if the royalists interdict the work, it is not alone Remondini that will have to suffer, poor Remondini who has incurred so much expense, but also .... Your Reverence understands me.

Write to me, then, and tell me whether the duke gave

[1] Father Andrea Villani.

you any precise information on the subject, whether the matter was broached to him by some priest, or whether, perhaps, he heard it discussed at the court. Meantime, I have addressed the enclosed letter to the duchess of Bovino, requesting her to be so gracious as to inquire of her husband concerning these particulars. If the duchess is still at Bovino, take this letter to her at once, I entreat you. Do not delay, and communicate to me her response. Write to me what you have done.

In regard to the Maffei matter, I once more beg your Reverence, and all the Fathers (I say, *I beg*, that I may avoid saying, *I command*), not to meddle in the least, not to meddle at all in the action of the municipality against Maffei. The only mediation you may exercise is to negotiate peace.[1] Inform Maffei, moreover, of what you have done to secure peace.

I bless Father Rector,[2] your Reverence, and all the subjects.

In case the duchess is not residing at Bovino and has returned to Naples, there will be no use in forwarding my letter to her. In that case destroy it.

BROTHER ALFONSO MARIA,
of the Most Holy Redeemer,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

1 See vol. ii. *General Correspondence*, Letters 581, 582, 583.
2 Father Stefano Liguori.

LETTER 203.

To Signor Giambattista Remondini.

The great care of the saint with regard to the refutation of Febronius.—Divers details.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, April 28, 1768.

Most Illustrious Sir: Your last favor of April 16, has come to hand. It made me both laugh and cry. You ask me what has become of Father Ferrara.[1] My dear Sir, it is quite a long while since he has returned to dust! I thought you were aware of this long ago. It is nearly a year since his death.

I think he gave some Father charge of the volumes he had in his possession. As regards myself, I have very little to do with the affairs of the Congregation. If I manage to transact properly the business of my diocese, I am achieving enough. I shall inquire which Father is now charged with the duty, and inform you.

It will prove a difficult matter to find another as able as Father Ferrara. He used to sell the books, not for cash, but for Mass-stipends, a plan that brings with it much anxiety. Enough, however. I shall soon let you know in whose hands the books are, and you may do with them as you see fit. The work destined for nuns [2] has not met with any sale, I am informed. It has been so often reprinted by our publishers here in Naples that the monasteries are supplied with it. Our Fathers have not the same facilities for selling books as the publishers.

I have succeeded in disposing of a number of *Morals*, and I hope to conclude before long a bargain for eighteen copies. It is true, I shall not receive the money immediately,

[1] Father Ferrara died on the 23d of August of the preceding year.

[2] "The True Spouse of Jesus Christ."

but shall have to wait till harvest time. If I close the bargain, however, the payment is assured, and I consider the contract as almost settled.

I have written to Signor Oronzio Noe, of Manfredonia, but as yet have received no reply concerning the packet of books on *Prayer*. The Latin translation of the *Instruction* [1] is progressing. I myself am engaged on the volume against F.[2] I pray you, in your letters to designate that author in this manner.

I have put aside every other work in order to occupy myself solely with this little book. It is proving quite a task for me. Including the time that I had previously spent in collecting the material, I have been engaged for four months on this publication. I was obliged to read two large tomes sent me from outside the kingdom, and I am now waiting for another voluminous publication from Naples.

The book will not require more than ten or twelve folios, but I have to weigh every word carefully, as the work, being brief and written in Latin, will be perused by all, and by F. himself. I have seen published against F. many bulky tomes, which will rarely be purchased and rarely read. Why? Because they are so voluminous and cost so much.

I should like to complete the book before starting on my Visitation; but a great deal has yet to be done. Enough. I am losing no time. Every moment I can snatch, I devote to this work.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] You must have ready a good reviser for the

1 "Instruction for the People."
2 Febronius.

pamphlet against F. I shall be satisfied with the one who corrected the *Moral*. I have already completed the first copy. I see, however, that I have made many erasures and added a great number of short notes (all of them, however, distinctly marked with asterisks and the necessary signs); for, as often as I discover a good point, I insert it in the text.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 204.

To the Same.

He announces the despatch of the refutation of Febronius. —Recommendations relative to the printing of this work.— Instruction as to the forwarding of copies.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, May 20, 1768.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have almost completed the work (you know to which one I allude), and in a short time you shall receive, through Signor Moschini, the small box containing the manuscript. I must forewarn you that, for very good reasons, you will not find in it any letter from me, but instead a letter, or rather, a slip of paper with no signature. Do not endeavor to divine the sense of the contents, as it is a letter without any meaning whatsoever. Be not surprised, therefore, if you cannot understand it.

I have already informed you, the book is a short one, though every word of it required much reflection. It cost me seven months of labor. I repeat once more, it would be well to make use of the largest type you can find for printing it. In that way, the volume would present a good appearance, and would not be condemned at first sight as too small. You, however, understand better than I how to regulate such details. Do as you think best.

With regard to your recommendation to me not to speak of the power of princes, I can assure you that, throughout the whole work, princes are not even named.

The reviser will have to be watchful, and at the same time skilled in his business; for, in order to finish the copying more quickly, I was obliged to employ several copyists for the task. As they possessed little knowledge of Latin, the manuscript was soon covered with mistakes and erasures. I have, besides, added to it a great number of small notes. The compositor will, therefore, make many blunders, and an experienced reviser will be needed to correct everything. You will select, then, for this duty, the same person that revised the *Moral.*

Properly speaking, I ought to have the copy-books in question recopied; but I am unable to undertake the task of dictating them a second time and then revising them. I should need two months disengaged from every other occupation, as I have been up to the present. But this coming month I shall have to begin my Visitation, which will leave me no time for such work. I have endeavored to correct all errors, and as regards the notes, they are all marked with asterisks and quotation marks. There need be no confusion.

I trust you will have the work printed without delay. I beg you, however, once the volume is printed, not to forward any copy to me through the agency of the Neapolitan booksellers. I only ask that you send me a dozen copies *via* Rome. Address them to Signor Abate Francesco Paolo Puoti, Strada del *Corso*, near the church of San Marco, opposite the library. As the said Abate Puoti will have to leave Rome toward the middle of August and return to Naples, as usual, he will be able to profit by this occasion to bring the copies to me secretly.

The two other works, namely, the Latin *Instruction* [1] and

[1] "Instruction for the People."

the *Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ*, I shall send you later. Just now, I am giving all my attention to finishing the small work; you understand to which one I refer.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 205.

To the Same.

Precautions taken to prevent the name of the author of the pamphlet against Febronius from becoming known.—Recommendations relative to the revision of this work.

ARIENZO, May 28, 1768.

Most Illustrious Sir: Last week I wrote to you that the pamphlet (you know which one) was almost completed. It is now finished. Nothing more remains to be done, save to revise it. Within ten or twelve days certainly, I shall forward it to you, enclosed in a small box, through the medium of Signor Moschini.

I had hoped to be able to despatch with it the *Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ;* but I cannot tell whether the latter will be finished within twelve days.

In my last letter I mentioned that you will find in the little box a note addressed to you, but without signature. Make no effort to understand its contents, for I have written it as a provision in case the box is opened at Naples and they wish to discover the name of the author. Do not seek to fathom its meaning, for it has none. For good reasons also, I send you in the present letter, the title-page of the

work.[1] The manuscript that you will receive, will contain no frontispiece. It begins with the words: *Finis Operis;* and then, on the line: *Postquam Christus Dominus.*

I take the occasion once more to urge secrecy, and I beg you to recommend the same to those of your employees who have read my letters. Tell them not to mention my name to anyone, not to *anyone.*

I have succeeded in closing the contract for the eighteen copies, and I have made the bill of payment due in September.

I have nothing further to remark. Do not forget to send me word as soon as you receive the book in question.

The packet of books on *Prayer* has not arrived, nor is there any news of it.

With sentiments of profound respect I subscribe myself, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

[*The signature of the saint is wanting.*]

[*P. S.*] I repeat: The reviser must be a man well versed in Latin; for, as the manuscript is covered with erasures, and I was unable to have it recopied, the compositor will, undoubtedly, make many mistakes. They will have to be corrected by a person who understands Latin, as well as the sense of the composition. I say once more, this manuscript has cost me seven or eight months of labor, al-

1 The letter contained the following title, written on a separate sheet:

"VINDICIÆ
PRO
SUPREMA ROMANI PONTIFICIS POTESTATE
CONTRA JUSTINUM FEBRONIUM
OPELLA
AB HONORIO DE HONORIO
ELUCUBRATA."

though it will not, I think, exceed eight or nine printed folios. I again request you to use the largest possible type.

When the volume is printed, do not fail to send at my expense a good number of copies (at least, forty or fifty) to Rome, to the Abate Francesco Puoti, at *S. Marco al Corso.* I have already sent him notice.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 206.

To the Same.

Prohibition in Portugal of all works of Moral containing the Bull *In Cœna Domini.*—Gravity of this measure.—Means of saving the copies of the saint's *Moral.*

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, June 1, 1768.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have learned from you the pleasant news from Portugal, I mean the prohibition of all works of Moral, which allude to the Bull *In Cœna,* as also to the subject of forbidden books.

Henceforth there shall exist no prohibited books! People will be able to read without let or hindrance the works of Luther, Calvin, etc. Of a truth, it would seem they are aiming to overthrow the Roman See and even to destroy the faith.

I am having all the servants of God offer up prayers for the Church. The Lord will send some heavy chastisement, I fear. I cannot believe that the other courts intend to prohibit all works in which there is mention of the Bull *In Cœna,* for every treatise on Moral Theology speaks of this Bull. It would be necessary to abolish from the world all works of Moral, not excluding even Concina, Natalis Alexander, Antoine, Pontas, Father Collet, and all the

others. There would no longer exist any possibility of studying Moral Theology, or rather, to do so, new books would have to be composed. Really, one is astounded to hear such things.

With regard to the copies of my *Theology* sent into Portugal, no other remedy remains save that which you have thought of, namely, to eliminate from the volume the folios in which allusion is made to the Bull *In Cœna* and the question of forbidden books.

In tome iii. page 103,[1] there is mention of the Bull *In Cœna*, and two folios will have to be eliminated. Moreover, quite a lengthy passage treating of a very important subject, the assaulting of clerics, must also be suppressed. There is no other remedy, if we do not wish to see the whole work cast into the flames.

In tome i. appendix iii. containing the dissertation on the prohibition of books, will have to be struck out. This is a matter of about five folios, from page 67 to page 76 inclusive.

Write to me, I pray, all that you can learn concerning this interdict; for to my mind it seems impossible that they wish to prohibit all works of Moral, though all make mention of the Bull *In Cœna*, the very first proposition of which contains the prohibition of heretical books, a question of sovereign importance in Moral Theology.

The Lord has been pleased to allow me to suffer for the last fifteen days severe internal pains, which have almost deprived me of life. It is due to his goodness that the work (you know to which one I allude) has just been completed. If the case had been otherwise, I should not have been able to do any more work on it; but, as I have said, I have just finished it. It only remains for me to revise a few smaller sheets, and next week, without fail, I shall forward it enclosed in a small box.

[1] Sixth edition.

In two preceding letters I announced to you that I would forward to you, with the manuscript, a counterfeit letter having no sense whatever. But now, I think it preferable, and it will simplify matters, not to send you this fictitious epistle; for I fear, if they open the little box, they will seize the manuscripts and cast them into the fire. May God forbid!

Do not forget to communicate to me all the news you may receive from Portugal or elsewhere, relative to the prohibition of works of Moral. I never can believe that all these kingdoms would forbid the millions of volumes treating on this branch of theology. We should, then, be obliged to take for our guides the works of Arnauld and Quesnel. I pray Jesus Christ to prevent this evil.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] My friends and I have been deliberating together as to what expedient should be adopted with regard to the *Morals*. The booksellers in Portugal who have copies of the work, could paste a sheet of paper over the whole chapter treating of the Bull *In Cœna;* as for the appendix on forbidden books, they will have to eliminate it entirely.

The safest plan, however, seems to be, to reprint the sheets containing the treatise on the Bull *In Cœna*, and suppress altogether article v., to be found in tome iii., at page 103, from n. 281 to n. 310, and begin anew with chapter iii. *De Suspensione*, page 106, n. 312. True, the said numbers will be wanting for a time, but that matters little. There is no other remedy just now, if we do not wish to have all the copies lost. When the work is reprinted, the marginal numbers, as well as those of the pages can be arranged in their proper order. With regard to the *Appendix* on forbidden books, the entire five sheets which

compose it, should be eliminated; and it matters nothing that there will remain a short fragment of the same at page 77, of the first volume.

There is no news yet of the packet containing the books on *Prayer*.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 207.

To the Same.

The saint has printed at Naples a small number of copies of the volume against Febronius.—His reason for this.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

[June, 1768.]

Most Illustrious Sir: I was on the point of sending you the volume (you understand which one I mean), but I changed my mind, judging it preferable to forward a printed copy. I already mentioned, and now more fully realize, that the manuscript is covered with erasures and additions of various lengths, so that it seems to me impossible for the printed sheets not to contain numberless errors, if the author himself does not revise and correct them. You must know, furthermore, that, when I revise my books, I make on the proof-sheets a great many corrections that I had not before thought of.

The work is short, and, if mistakes were discovered in it, it would at once fall into disfavor. I am aware that you have a careful reviser. It appears to me, however, impossible for him to correct the numberless blunders that the compositor would certainly make, especially, as the book is in Latin. The original copy is, besides, poorly written, as

I had it transcribed by different persons, and certain passages are difficult to decipher.

Please, then, be patient and wait a little. The five or six folios that compose the pamphlet will soon be printed. I have written instructions to that effect to my printer at Naples.

Another very strong reason which impelled me to have the work printed secretly here at Naples before forwarding it to you, is the great severity with which they treat such works in this capital. They need only open the little box and examine the manuscript, and I should see destroyed in an instant the labor of eight months, a labor which, as I mentioned before, it would be difficult for me to begin anew. This fear of losing the manuscript has been the chief motive that induced me to have the work printed at Naples. I shall thus be able to correct it quickly, and the printed text will be an improvement on the manuscript. After that, I shall send you a copy. If it be lost, it matters little. I shall despatch another, for I intend to have a number printed, though not more than eight or ten. I am even thinking of sending you the sheets one by one, in letters, just as they issue from the press, as in that way they will be more apt to reach you safely.

This last plan will put me to some expense, but what does that signify? There is question of defending the Church in the terrible trial through which she is passing.

Another remark: If you could conceal your own name when you have the book printed, I should be very much pleased; but I know not whether the thing is possible. If it cannot be done, then let this last remark be as if unsaid. Excuse me for having troubled you by so many letters about this little pamphlet. Excuse me, I say, for this work has

been long a source of anxiety to me on account of the rumors current, and which are ever on the increase.[1]

The *Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ* is nearing completion, and in a short time I shall forward it to you together with the Latin *Instruction*.[2]

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

[*The signature is wanting.*]

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 208.

To the Same.

Precautions to be taken with regard to the volume against Febronius.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

[June, 1768.]

Most Illustrious Sir: I respond to your last favor. I announced to you in my preceding letter that, in view of the state of affairs at the present time, and also, to enable me to revise the work, I judged it necessary to have the first printing of the volume executed at this place. I hope within a week to commence sending you the sheets, one by one, in my letters. Sometimes you may receive them alone without any letter. Great caution must be exercised, for the storm has increased, and they are displaying extreme rigor here. I cannot confide to paper the

[1] He alludes to the ever-increasing troubles between the court of Naples and that of Rome. On the 11th of June, 1768, for example, Tanucci snatched from the Holy See the state of Benevento and Ponte Corvo, from which he expelled the Jesuits and confiscated their property.

[2] "Instruction for the People."

reasons which impel me to have the first printing done at this place.

I beg you to destroy this after you have read it. I request, moreover, when you commence the printing, that you omit your name, Remondini, from the title-page. Mention neither Remondini nor Venice, for perhaps, suspicion is already aroused against me in Naples, and it is known everywhere that you do me the favor of printing my works. We must, therefore, use great precaution.

Do not forget, when the volume is completed to despatch twenty or thirty copies to Rome to Signor Abate Francesco Paolo Puoti, who resides hard by the *Church of S. Marco al Corso.* If Abate Puoti cannot be found, leave the copies with Abate Argenti, who occupies the same house.

Have you received any news from Portugal concerning the *Morals?* I should like to know what steps you have determined to take to remedy the evil. I wrote to you that there remains no other remedy than to suppress all the sheets in which there is mention of the Bull *In Cœna* and the prohibition of books.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

[*The signature of the saint is wanting.*]

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 209.

To the Same.

He asks for news from Portugal.—Observations on the subject of *Probabilism.*

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, June 30, 1768.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have despatched to you, through Signor Moschini, my book on the *Practice of the Love of*

Jesus Christ, a work that has been received with great applause in Naples. This will be my last ascetical work.

I hope in a short while to begin forwarding to you the folios of the other pamphlet.[1] I have written to you repeatedly about this volume, but as yet received no response. When you answer, please take all precaution.

I should like to know whether you have received any further news from Portugal concerning the *Morals*. I have read in the Neapolitan "Announcements" that in Portugal an ecclesiastic has been charged with the duty of prohibiting all *Morals* teaching corrupt doctrine.

By *Morals teaching corrupt doctrine*, they mean all books of Moral written by Jesuits. Now, all the *Morals* composed by Jesuits do not teach corrupt doctrine. The works of Cardinal De Lugo, Suarez, Layman, Lessius, Castropalaus, and other similar writers, do not teach corrupt doctrine.[2]

[1] The refutation of Febronius.

[2] One may affirm that the majority of Jesuits followed these great masters, and that, with the exception of questions really free for discussion, they were of one accord whenever there was question of sound Catholic moral. However, there were not wanting among them some who inclined too much toward the milder opinions, just as other writers had leaned too much toward the opposite side. It is on this account that St. Alphonsus declared in his letter of February 13, 1776: "I do not belong to the party of the old Probabilists, nor am I a Jesuit after the type of those Jesuits who have been too mild." The enemies of the Jesuits would never make any distinction, and charged the entire Society with inculcating lax Moral teaching.

We beg our readers to keep before their minds this observation, as well as another which we have made in connection with Letter 102, when, as in the present, and in other epistles of the saint, they perceive the holy Doctor defending his *Moral Theology* or his Institute, and in that defence affirming that he was neither a Jesuit nor an adherent of the opinions held by the Jesuits. Indeed, he followed a system entirely his own, and combated without distinction all opinions which were too mild; and as the enemies of the Jesuits and of the Church never ceased to attack him on this point in order

It is true, my *Theology* contains the work of Busenbaum; nevertheless, I do not follow slavishly everything that Busenbaum maintains. In how many points do I not contradict this author and resolutely oppose him! Franzoia has pursued the same method as I in commenting on Busenbaum; and yet, Franzoia's work has never been, nor will it ever be prohibited. I cannot, therefore, understand why my *Moral* should be prohibited: when even the partisans of the Rigorist System have declared that, putting aside the System of Probabilism, my decisions are very equitable. They even go so far as to assert that, in particular opinions, I am more severe than mild.

As to my System of Probabilism, it is by no means that of the Jesuits; for I do not admit that a person may follow an opinion recognized as *less probable*, as is affirmed by Busenbaum, La Croix, and almost all the Jesuits, who admit the less probable opinion.

I have desired to tell you all this that you may communicate it to others, when the opportunity presents itself. A further argument in my favor is the fact that, whilst in France they have consigned to the flames a great number of works composed by Jesuits, they have spared mine.

Who could ever have imagined that the Jesuits would one day pass on all sides for assassins and fomenters of sedition!

I have written quite often to Signor Oronzio Noe concerning the books on *Prayer*, but have thus far received no response. I beg you to procure some information on the

to hinder the diffusion of his works and to compass the downfall of his Institute, he saw himself constrained to return frequently to the same asseverations.

matter, either from Manfredonia, or from the master of the bark, to whom the books were confided.

With deepest respect I remain, Illustrious Sir,

[*The signature is wanting.*]

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 210.

To the Same.

He asks for a favor, and announces the existence of difficulties in connection with the volume against Febronius.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, July 6, 1768.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received your very kind letter of June 11.

I have written frequently to Signor Oronzio Noe about the packet of books you sent him to Manfredonia, but have received no reply. Write to Signor Oronzio yourself, and see if you can draw an answer from him.

As regards the affair of which you spoke in your last letter, they wished to terminate it. But just now certain difficulties which it would take too long to explain in this letter, present themselves. You will be informed of everything at the proper time. Nothing further.

[*The signature is wanting.*]

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 211.

To the Same.

Important occurrence at Naples relative to the *Moral Theology*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, July 8, 1768.

Most Illustrious Sir: I was somewhat agitated these past days at the news that an edict had been issued at the custom-house forbidding the entrance into Naples of my *Morals*, and in particular of those you had sent to Signor Stasi. This very morning, however, I have received assurance that this is not the case, nor will it ever be so. The censor of foreign books went to the custom-officer and declared that he had examined my *Moral*, and found it just in its decisions. With regard to the System of Probabilism, he observed that, far from embracing the System of the Jesuits, I am opposed to it; for, whereas the Jesuits allow the less probable opinion, I reject it. But enough on this point. After hearing the above and on other considerations, the officer gave positive permission to introduce and disseminate my *Moral*. I have furthermore been assured that the work will neither be interdicted, nor even temporarily prohibited, especially as the officer has been given to understand that my book has very little about the Bull *In Cœna*, and that little is couched in language more moderate than in other volumes.

I was desirous to write these details to you, having received them this noon.

I have already despatched to Naples [1] the *Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ*, printed in that city with the customary approbations. I have also sent the manuscript

[1] For forwarding to Venice.

of the Latin translation of the Italian *Instruction*,[1] likewise printed and approved in the capital. You will soon receive them through Signor Moschini.

Nothing further. I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 212.

To the Same.

He cherishes a hope that the *Moral Theology* will not be prohibited in Portugal.—Reason for this hope.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, July 23, 1768.

Most Illustrious Sir: I received your very welcome favor of July 2d, and I learn from it that you have had no news from Portugal about the *Moral*.

If the Portuguese magistrates wish to prohibit all *Morals* that speak of the Bull *In Cœna*, they will have to prohibit nearly all the *Morals* in existence, in fact, I may say all. What *Moral* is there that does not allude to this Bull, since the very first subject mentioned is the important one of heretical works..

A report, published in the "Announcements" of Naples, has been current, to the effect that the Portuguese magistrates had prohibited all works teaching corrupt doctrine. I hope they do not include my *Moral* in this category. This same order was issued at Naples, and, as I wrote to you in my last, the royal censors interdicted the admission of the *Morals* you had despatched to our booksellers. But after an examination of the work, they declared to the

[1] "Instruction for the People."

ministers that my *Moral* contained sound doctrine, and as for the Bull *In Cœna*, it says little concerning it and that little with reserve. The book was permitted free ingress. The same thing will happen, I trust, in Portugal.

When you obtain fresh information on this matter, I hope you will communicate it to me. I am awaiting, also, a word from you about the receipt of the *Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ* and the *Instruction*, the manuscript Latin translation of which I despatched to you through the medium of Signor Moschini. These books will not meet, I trust, with the fate of the books on *Prayer*. I cannot find out whether the latter are among the living or the dead. Please find out something about them, either from Manfredonia, or from the master of the bark that transported them.

With regard to the pamphlet,[1] you shall receive every information at the proper time.

Besides the eighteen *Morals* already disposed of, I have succeeded in selling fifteen more to different persons. I am just now collecting the money for the eighteen. When received, I shall forward to you the entire amount.

With deepest respect I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

[1] The volume against Febronius.

LETTER 213.

To the Same.

Reason for the delay in forwarding the pamphlet against Febronius.—A new work he is composing.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, August 3, 1768.

Most Illustrious Sir: I reply to your last favor of July 23. I was very much gratified to hear that Signor Oronzio Noe had acknowledged the receipt of the packet of books on *Prayer*, though I have received no reply from him. I shall write to him this very week; and, as our Congregation possesses a house in Puglia, not far from Manfredonia, I shall charge the Rector of that place to secure the packet. Together with these treatises on *Prayer*, I shall receive the work, entitled, "Philosophy of Wit", which you have been kind enough to add to them, as your letter tells me. This book will prove an excellent one; but, since the author belongs to the Society, it will meet a poor reception.

I have more than once spoken to you of my *Dissertation* on the spirituality of the soul,[1] but I have not yet despatched it to you. I am waiting till I can find a secure way of sending it. My opponent is very intimate with the postal authorities, and I am afraid that they may open my letters and the manuscripts confided to the courier. I cannot explain to you in detail how far his animosity extends, but what you already know, will give you some idea of it. Enough on this point. As soon as the author, my adversary, is quieted, I shall inform you of everything.

I hope that by this time you have received, through

[1] Under this fictitious title the saint refers to the "Vindiciæ" against Febronius.

Signor Moschini, the *Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ* and the Latin translation of the *Instruction.*

With sentiments of profound respect I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] I am at this moment engaged in composing a new book on the *Ceremonies of the Mass.* It is intended for the priests of my diocese and for all ecclesiastics. This work is an elaborate one, as I am not the only one engaged on it. Others are laboring with me. I have, besides, found an excellent treatise on the subject by Father Ferrara, who consulted all the authors. At the end of the book, I am adding seven meditations on the *Passion*, for the use of priests as a preparation for Mass, and seven thanksgivings after Mass.

A good part of the volume is already completed, but I have just been obliged to interrupt my work, being forced to prepare myself to conduct the retreat this November for the clergy of Naples. I did not wish to go, but I am obliged to do so by the command of my spiritual Father.[1]

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

[1] Father Andrea Villani. — See letter of July 18, 1768, *General Correspondence.*

LETTER 214.

To the Same.

He asks for news concerning the two works mentioned in the preceding letter.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, September 28, 1768.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have had no news from you for a long time, and I am ignorant as to whether you have received the small parcel containing the two works. Please send me word on this matter.

The packet of books has not yet reached me, although I have been assured that it reached Manfredonia some time ago.

I have been quite sick, as I wrote to you more than once; but now, thanks be to God, I am free from fever. I have transmitted to my agent at Naples, seventy-five ducats, ninety grains, money of the kingdom, with the request to forward it to you through your correspondent. It is due from books sold.

Send me some news about the prohibition of the *Morals*.

I have nothing further to add.—I remain, as ever, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 215.

To the Same.

Serious illness of the saint.—Brochure of the saint on the Mass-stipend.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, October 9, 1768.

Most Illustrious Sir: Your favor of September 3d, has come to hand, and I learn that you have received the manuscript of the *Practice*.[1]

In my letter of last week, I informed you that I had received the fifty copies of the book on *Prayer*, also the fifty of the *Instruction*.[2] I requested you to let me know the price of the *Instruction* and of the volume on *Prayer*, as I no longer have your letter indicating these prices.

I wrote to you some time ago that next November I shall have to conduct the retreat of the Neapolitan clergy. The Lord, however, has been pleased to make me enter, since the beginning of August, a different kind of retreat, one which will continue during the month and throughout the whole winter. At the beginning of August, I was seized with nervous sufferings that will accompany me through life. I cannot walk, in fact, I cannot move, without intense pain, and I am confined to bed. I give thanks to God for having sent me this little present.

I have begun to have printed the volume on the *Ceremonies of the Mass*. Since forced to keep my bed, I have composed a refutation of a certain anonymous work, reprinted at Naples and treating on the *Stipend for Mass*.[3]

1 "Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ."

2 "Instruction for the People."

3 The work of the saint has for its title: "Response to the Anonymous Publication, entitled: Dissertation on the Mass-Stipend."

The author, a Frenchman, would abolish all Mass-stipends. He would have us return to the usage of the first centuries, when one common Mass was said for all the faithful, at which everyone brought his offering, which served for the maintenance of the churches and the support of the priests. I have demonstrated that, for various reasons, it is impossible nowadays, to return to the ancient custom.

I shall insert this little treatise, in the form of a third part, at the end of the volume on the *Ceremonies of the Mass*. As soon as I shall have finished this volume, and it will be short, I shall forward it to you.

. You speak to me of the treatise on the spirituality of the soul; but, surely, you are making a mistake. At one time, I had ready a fine work on this subject, and it served me, as did some other books, for a treatise on the spirituality of the soul in my volume on *Faith*, in which I believe I collected together all that could be said on that subject.[1]

With regard to my *Moral*, I have already informed you, I think, that they forbade its introduction into Naples. The prohibition was afterward removed, and I have been assured that the work will never encounter the same peril again.

I am just now pursuing with pleasure the *Reply* of the Jesuit to the author of "Wit". It is, indeed, a learned

The author of the anonymous pamphlet was the French Benedictine, Dom Antoine Guyard, who published it in 1748. The work was translated into Italian and published at Naples, in 1768. It was issued from the establishment of Domenico Torres.

1 Remondini had not perceived that the saint, in his letter of the 3d of August (see Letter 213) meant to designate under this fictitious title, the refutation of Febronius. The severe sickness of the holy Doctor caused him likewise to forget the disguised designation.

one, and I trust you will be so kind as to send me, according to promise, the second part of the work.

With profound respect I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 216.

To Father Andrea Villani.

He points out the manner of defending his *Moral* against the accusations raised in Sicily.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, November 6, 1768.

Father Blasucci has written to me a pressing letter, begging me to represent to Tanucci that our *Moral* is not at all the work which he has condemned at Palermo as following the System of the Jesuits.

I have already written, I told you, to Targianni,[1] to the viceroy, and to the two bishops belonging to the Junta of Palermo.

As regards Tanucci, if one of our Fathers seeks an audience with him, he will never obtain it. We must, therefore, have recourse to Don Gaetano Celano,[2] and he will give Tanucci to understand that, far from following the System of Probabilism taught by the Jesuits, I maintain (and my *Moral* has it in print) that one should follow the *more probable* opinion, and, likewise, that I affirm that one is not allowed to follow the *less probable* opinion, as the Jesuits teach. He shall also tell him that my book of *Moral* has been examined at Naples by Father Master Iorio and other

1 Consultor of the Junta of Sicily.

2 See letter of March 28, 1767, vol. ii. *General Correspondence.*

theologians, by order of the custom-officer, and the teaching therein contained has been pronounced sound, and not lax as has been falsely represented to Signor Targianni at Palermo.

The lawyer will surely have more influence with Tanucci than one of our Fathers.

Stress may, also, be laid on the fact that the bishop of Girgenti,[1] a prelate of great learning, has for many years employed the subjects of our Congregation to give missions in his extensive diocese, and has praised them to the viceroy as men who profess sound doctrine. He tried them throughout his diocese, which contains very many learned men; and having received from all sides the best accounts of their zeal and sound doctrine in preaching, instructing, and hearing confessions, he presented to the viceroy a petition for a renewal of their apostolic labors. But the minister at Palermo would neither see our Fathers nor listen to them nor test them in any way. Allowing himself to be guided by false prejudice, perhaps also by the base reports of some modern Rigorist of note, he accused them of professing a lax, Jesuit System of Moral. All this Celano should represent to Tanucci.

Another idea, however, has just come to my mind. Should Tanucci confide the censorship of my *Moral* to some professor at the royal university, the following will be the result. As these professors are for the most part in keeping with fashion, and Rigorists, admitting few probable opinions, some one of them will send in a report worse, perhaps, than that of Targianni. I fear, therefore, that we shall only aggravate the situation. If that were to be the case, I should abandon all to the providence of God, without running this risk at Naples, where we are in a bad enough light at present.

[1] Mgr. Andrea Lucchesi.

Please, Reverend Father, give me your opinion. I bless your Reverence and all the subjects.

BROTHER ALFONSO MARIA.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 217.

To Father Pietro Paolo Blasucci, Superior of the House at Girgenti.

Concise and clear exposition of the System of Moral followed by the holy Doctor.

[November, 1768.]

. . . . . I shall speak first of the Probable Opinion, and shall answer you at length on this point, as I desire to explain myself once for all and to revert to the subject no more.

I believe I have clearly demonstrated, thanks be to God, the principle, that a doubtful law does not oblige; for, as St. Thomas and all theologians affirm, a law that is not sufficiently promulgated, does not oblige. When there are two probable opinions confronting each other, it is not the law that is promulgated, but only the doubt whether the law exists or not. When, therefore, the two opinions are equally probable, the law does not oblige, since it is doubtful.

Before my book[1] appeared, this point was obscure; now, however, everyone confesses that it is as clear as daylight. You may convince yourself of this by reading the letters I have had printed. Remark in particular the letter of Father [Prospero] dell' Aquila, who was at one time not only a *Probabiliorist*, but even a *Tutiorist;* but see what he now declares to me in his epistle, and what he has also inserted in his "Dictionary": "The question is now so

[2] "On the Moderate Use of the Probable Opinion," 1765.

clearly settled," he affirms, "that there can be no reply to my argumentation." See the book *On the Moderate Use*, page 277.

Father Magnani, Provincial of the Augustinians, a man of great reputation for learning, wrote me lately that a number of learned men, to whom he had given my book, declared it impossible to answer it. In fact, all authors, even ancient ones, St. Thomas, Nyder, St. Raymond, Armilla, Gerson, St. Antoninus, etc., teach the same as myself when they affirm that one should not condemn any action as sinful, if the sinfulness is not certain.

What matters it, then, if a few men of learning teach the contrary? They do not understand the real point at issue, and they talk at random. Father Patuzzi has only confirmed me in my opinion; for of the numerous *Replies* that he has written against me, not a single one touches the precise point in debate. Even his friends have acknowledged this.

But it will be urged: *In dubiis tutior, etc.*—This law applies to the case in which we are in doubt; but when a person acts, relying on the aforesaid reflex principle, he does not act in doubt, but with moral certitutude. This objection, therefore, is outside the question.

Let us now examine your idea, namely, that one ought to follow the Rigid Opinion which has one or two degrees of preponderance.

This rule seems to me very vague and apt to engender scruples; for it is difficult to find a measure that will weigh these two degrees or this one degree of preponderance. My rule appears to me very clear and certain: When the opinion in favor of the law is certainly *more probable*, I affirm that one is not allowed to follow the *less certain* opinion. I am, therefore, not a *Tutiorist*, but a genuine *Probabiliorist*. Thus, when I know that the rigid opinion is *more probable*, I maintain that it should be followed; and

in this I am opposed to the System of the Jesuits. On the other hand, when the rigid opinion is *equally probable*, or doubtfully *more probable*, then one may follow the mild opinion. And why? Because when the opinion is *equally probable*, or if one doubts as to whether it is a *little more probable*, the law is doubtful, strictly doubtful, and in that case the principle is applicable: a doubtful law does not oblige; for in that case the doubt of the existence of the law is sufficiently promulgated, but not the law itself. When, on the contrary, the rigid opinion is to my mind certainly *more probable*, I must follow it, for in that case the law is sufficiently promulgated for me, and is no longer doubtful, strictly doubtful, but doubtful in a broad sense that does not free me from the obligation of adhering to the law.

Nevertheless, it is true that if the rigid opinion *is certainly more probable*, it is at the same time more probable, also, with a strong preponderance; for when the preponderance is slight, there exists a doubt whether it is *more probable* or *equally probable*, and in that case the rule applies: *Parum pro nihilo reputatur.*

It is on this account that the modern Rigorists, who require moral certitude, assert that to follow the mild opinion, it is not sufficient that it seems a little more probable, *quia parum, etc.;* but in order to allow a person to follow the mild opinion, they would require that the rigid opinion does not appear at all probable; they, therefore, exact moral certitude, *not strictly so* (for then they would fall under the condemned proposition), but broadly. We, on the contrary, affirm that when a person doubts whether the rigid opinion is *equally probable* or a *little more probable*, then the doubt is a *strict* doubt and makes the law really doubtful. To me it seems undeniable that, when it is not certain, but doubtful whether the rigid opinion is a *little more probable*, then the law is strictly doubtful, and a

person may in that case safely follow the mild opinion. The case is different, as I have remarked, when the rigid opinion is *certainly more probable.*

This, then, is my System, and I hold it for certain, so much so that in my diocese I do not accord the faculty of hearing confessions to him who would follow the opinion *certainly less probable;* at the same time I do not give faculties to him that would deny absolution to a penitent who holds the *equi-probable* opinion, or the opinion which to him is not certain, but of which he is doubtful as to whether it is a *little less probable.*

I believe I have explained myself sufficiently.

As regards the particular decisions contained in my *Moral*, the Probabiliorists themselves have found them equitable. I have even the reputation of being more rigid than mild.

Furthermore, I set forth the authorities and the arguments in favor of both sides, the unquestionable duty, it seems to me, of the writer on Moral. In this way, everyone can follow for himself what appears to him *absolutely probable* or *more probable* . . . . . .

[*The rest is wanting.*]

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 218.

To Father Stefano Longobardi, of the Congregation of the Pious Workers, at Naples.

He asks for an important work.—Details concerning the saint's book, entitled: *Dogmatic Work against the Pretended Reformers.*

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, March 13, 1769.

Very Reverend and Honored Father: I have need, my dear Father Stefano, to examine certain points in the work, entitled: "Light",[1] composed by Father Ludovico Sabatini for the use of parish priests for Sunday sermons.

Please tell me whether you have this work. You would oblige me very much by lending it to me, that I might look for something that I need. Favor me with one or two volumes at a time. In case your Reverence does not possess the work, you will easily find it in one of your houses. I beg this favor from you, for the glory of God.

I am at this moment printing a very useful book, an abridgment of the *History of the Council of Trent*,[2] by Cardinal Pallavicini, which latter is very much confused.

I know, Father Morelli, the Camaldolese, has already published a compendium of the work. It, also, is confused. Pallavicini and Morelli speak of all the events, even political, that happened during the time of the Council. I limit myself to the dogmatic points of faith defined by the Council. My work contains, therefore, sound Dogma. I state not merely the deliberations held and the objections discussed during the sessions, which are narrated in so confused a manner by Pallavicini and Morelli, but I introduce into each chapter the teaching of other authors. Moreover, I

[1] "Light of the Gospel."

[2] "Dogmatic Work against the Pretended Reformers."

have added to my work certain special theological treatises; for example, the treatise *On the Manner in which Grace Operates*. In this latter I have briefly examined almost all the systems of the School on efficacious and sufficient grace, and I combat in particular the System of Father Berti. Furthermore, I have placed at the end of the volume a very useful treatise on the *Infallibility of the Church*, on the *Rule of Faith*, and on the *Necessity of an Infallible Judge*. This plan of argumentation is the best for convincing heretics. They have an answer, indeed, to everything that is adduced; but when one speaks of the *Rule of Faith*, they know not what to say, or else they embarrass themselves by their own answers, and make assertions that are obviously absurd. This I demonstrate in the treatise.[1]

A good number of folios have already been printed. As soon as the volume is completed, I shall despatch it to you; but I beg your Reverence to endeavor to procure for me the work of Father Sabatini, as I requested you in the beginning of this letter.

My habitual infirmities still confine me to bed; but I am free from fever, and my head is strong. I have, consequently, more time at my disposal to compose one or the other book for the glory of God and the good of the Church. Little do they print nowadays in defence of the Church, in comparison with all they publish for her destruction.

I recommend myself to your prayers.

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] I have found here at Arienzo, in the possession of the archpriest, the work of Father Sabatini. He has,

1 This dissertation bears the title: "On the Obedience Due to the Definitions of the Council, and, in consequence, to the Roman Catholic Church, Outside of Which there is No Salvation."

however, only the third and fourth volumes, the first and second are wanting. Please, then, Reverend Father, have the goodness to send me the first two volumes only.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 219.

To Father Pietro Paolo Blasucci, Superior of the House at Girgenti.

Conditions requisite for an opinion to be certainly and notably *more probable* than the opposite opinion, when the former is in favor of the law, and the latter in favor of liberty.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO August 8, 1769.

With impatience I awaited your response. To express myself in a few words, it has relieved me from anxiety and filled me with consolation, for I perceive that substantially we are of the same mind.

Let me say, in the first place, that I do not speak of particular opinions. In them, everyone should follow the dictates of his conscience. I speak of the general system, which one ought to embrace if he has a mind to follow the true doctrine in regard to probable opinions.

Your Reverence has misunderstood me on this point. I do not say in § 1 that the true doctrine makes it allowable to follow all probable opinions, but I do say *what the true doctrine* concerning the licit use of probable opinions *is*, and I intend to prove the same.

I was pleased with the explanation you give me, in your letter, of some equivocal phrases to which, having in view a letter you addressed to me some months ago, I attributed a different sense. In the latter, you proposed this objection: Let the principle be supposed that a doubtful law

does not oblige, then it follows that one may follow even the *less probable* opinion. Here are your words: *If, then, such a law cannot be called sufficiently promulgated* (namely, when it is doubtful), *how can it oblige us not to follow the opinion much less probable which remains within the limits of true probability? Why restrict us to the equi-probable only, as being strictly doubtful? etc. I perceive, then, from what I have remarked above concerning the sufficient promulgation of the law, that your Reverence is defending the Probabilism of the Jesuits, and not merely Equi-Probabilism.* Then you add: *If the texts cited in favor of the certitude of the law should not be understood as implying a strict certitude and should, therefore, not be taken in their natural sense, we must affirm with Patuzzi that it is not necessary to have a true knowledge of the law, but it suffices to have some sort of knowledge of the same, etc.* These words in addition to those of the preceding letter, confused me. But not I am at rest; for in your last letter, you explained yourself clearly, and affirmed that the use of the equi-probable opinion is licit, because the law is then not promulgated.

You regret that I have not composed the *Apology* according to your wishes. I had no other aim in that work than to set forth my System in a clearer light.

Even had I desired to do so, I could no longer keep secret this System of mine, as I had spoken of it in so many of my works.

I had received information that complaints were raised at Palermo that I, in my *Moral*, and my companions in their practice, follow the Lax Probabilism of the Jesuits. This it was that determined me to write the *Apology*. I had, it is true, already said everything in my book, entitled: *On the Moderate Use, etc.* But in this pamphlet my System appeared quite confused, being encumbered with the innumerable objections and fallacies of Father Patuzzi. I re-

solved, accordingly, to condense in a few pages the substance of the arguments and authorities, and this not only for Sicily, but for all other countries, so that the public, without being obliged to read much, might have before their eyes the decisive arguments for the System in question.

You declare that when the opinion favorable to the law is *more probable*, even to the extent of one degree only, the mind is naturally drawn to embrace it. This I do not deny. But when one doubts whether this greater degree exists or not, the mind is not drawn but remains in suspense. This is what I have frequently explained, affirming that when a person is certain that the rigid opinion is *more probable*, he ought to follow it; but when it is doubtful whether the rigid opinion is *equally probable* or a *little more probable*, though so little that one is in doubt whether the opinion is a *little more probable* or only *equally probable*, in that case I affirm that the law is strictly doubtful, and cannot be called promulgated. Naturally, therefore, it does not then oblige the conscience either of well-instructed persons or of the unlearned.

I maintain, furthermore, that when the rigid opinion is certainly *more probable*, even to the extent of one degree only, it is at the same time notably *more probable;* for this certitude of a greater probability proves that the probability preponderates to such a degree that it suffices to turn the balance. Thus I assert that the opinion certainly *more probable* is the same thing as the opinion notably *more probable;* for if the greater degree of probability were not notable, it would not be able to turn the balance. Moreover, as long as I assert that one should follow the opinion certainly *more probable*, even though it be *more probable* (but certainly) to the extent of one degree only, all ambiguity disappears.

In the *Apology* I state the following: *When the intellect*

sees with certainty that the truth is more in favor of the law than of liberty, the will cannot prudently and without fault embrace the less secure side. How could I express myself more clearly.

With regard to the *notably* more probable, your Reverence will tell me the weight of ten ounces is certainly greater than that of mine, although the excess is not notable. I answer: That is true of physical matter; but in metaphysical matter, and when there is question of judgments of the intellect, I affirm that when the excess is certain, it is at the same time notable; for, if it were not notable, it would not be certain, but ambiguous and doubtful, and would, therefore, not prove the law to be sufficiently promulgated.

I repeat once more: When the rigid opinion is certainly *more probable*, one must follow it, for in that case the law is already sufficiently promulgated.

Do not believe, Reverend Father, that everyone holds the System of Concina as do those theologians of Girgenti, men really prejudiced, who have adopted the prejudices with which their teachers were imbued. Besides, there are many persons who talk without understanding the real point in debate; and that is the reason so many men of erudition have seen the matter clearly and changed their opinion, after reading my book. This, then, is how I apply the dictum, *parum pro nihilo reputatur:* it applies when the mild opinion is *less probable* to so small a degree that one is in doubt whether it is a *little less probable* or whether it is *equally probable;* for when the probability in favor of the law is so weak that a person is in doubt whether it exists or does not exist, it does not turn the scale, and, consequently, does not give evidence that the law is promulgated.

You need not write to me any more on this point. What you have already written, is sufficient to satisfy my mind.

In conclusion, I must say I am pleased to hear that your

young men are working with ardor. Bless them all for me, one by one. I bless your Reverence in particular. God knows how I esteem you. The very thought, the mere apprehension, that you had become a follower of Concina, almost broke my heart.

Another joy for me is the news that the bishop of Girgenti [1] will prove one of our protectors. Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

Thanks be to God, my stomach and my head are in good condition, and I have been able to complete my *Dogmatic Work* [2] in defence of the dogmas defined by the Council of Trent against the innovators. This book has greatly pleased those who have begun to read it. There is much useful instruction in it. The first opportunity that offers I shall forward the volume to you by way of Vietri. At present there is no other route, it seems to me, by which I might transmit it.

My head gives me no more trouble; but I cannot walk without supporting myself on the arm of another, my legs refusing to sustain me. I have not said Mass for a year, as my rheumatism has bent my neck in such a manner that I cannot raise it to take the Precious Blood. Indeed, no hope has been given me that I shall be able to say Mass any more.[3] I have made use of remedies without number. I have taken baths, and yet my neck remains the same as ever. God wills it; I will it, also.

My resolution is taken. I shall resign my bishopric, and go to die among my children in the Congregation. The only difficulty in the matter is the manner and the time;

[1] Mgr. Antonio Lanza, of the Theatine Order, preconized Bishop of Girgenti on November 20, 1769.

[2] "Dogmatic Work against the Heretics of the Pretended Reformation."

[3] On August 26, contrary to all expectation, the saint had the happiness to commence once more to celebrate the holy Sacrifice. See vol. ii. *Gen. Cor.*, Letter 629, note 3, p. 351.

nevertheless, there will be no delay. Keep the matter secret for the present, as I wish no one to know of it, not even the members of the Congregation.

One word more in regard to your letter. Yes, certainly, it suffices that the opinion be *more probable* to the extent of one degree; however, let us fully understand each other. This degree must be such that it renders me certain that the opinion is *more probable*, and that it makes me perceive the law to be morally or sufficiently promulgated. Henceforth, then, let us return no more to this subject.

BROTHER ALFONSO MARIA,
of the Most Holy Redeemer.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 220.

To the Sovereign Pontiff Clement XIV.

He dedicates to the Pope his *Dogmatic Work against the Heretics of the Pretended Reformation.*

[ARIENZO, 1769.]

The exaltation of Your Holiness to the See of St. Peter, has evoked extraordinary rejoicing throughout the whole Catholic world. But I know not whether anyone has felt greater consolation thereat than myself, considering, as I did, the excellent qualities with which Your Holiness is endowed, I mean Your learning, prudence, detachment from things of earth, and, above all, Your piety and zeal for the interests of our holy religion.

These considerations animate me with confidence, and I do myself the honor of humbly placing at Your feet the present work. Approaching, as I am, the end of my mortal career (I have already reached my seventy-third year), I have felt a great desire to publish this book, and in that way make known to the whole world the truth and sanctity

of the dogmas defined by a Council that can never be sufficiently extolled, the holy Council of Trent. Thus everyone will behold the condemnation of the errors of the pretended reformers, who, renewing ancient heresies, have sought by sophisms and false doctrine to overthrow the Faith of Jesus Christ, and draw with themselves all souls (if that were indeed possible) into eternal perdition.

Your Holiness will, I trust, deign to receive with Your wonted kindness the poor and humble offering I present. Bless the book, I supplicate you, and bless me and all my companions, so that we may be able to labor with profit for the salvation of souls, and evangelize by means of the holy missions the country-people most destitute of spiritual assistance, and thus accomplish the end of our most humble Congregation. On our part, we, humble children of Your Holiness, shall not cease to supplicate the Lord to grant You length of years, for the good of all the faithful and the increase of our holy faith.

Humbly prostrate at the feet of Your Holiness, I am with deepest respect,

Your very humble, very obedient,
and very grateful servant and son,
ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata de' Goti.

After the folio printed at the beginning of the Neapolitan edition of 1769, Gianfrancesco Paci, publisher.

LETTER 221.

To Signor Giambattista Remondini.

He forwards the *Dogmatic Work*, together with some additions destined for the seventh edition of the *Moral*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, August 20, 1769.

Most Illustrious Sir: You have already received, I hope, the letter in which I gave you in advance lengthy details concerning my latest work. I now forward the volume to you, and I join thereto numerous manuscript additions not contained in the copies of the work printed at Naples.

In my last letter, I announced to you that I had no more than two hundred and fifty copies of the Neapolitan edition printed. Deduct from this number those (and they are not few) which I must present to the royal ministers, gowned and not gowned, also the copies I must offer my friends, and there will be few remaining. I was really compelled to have the first edition printed at Naples, for I made many corrections on the proof-sheets, and I arranged a number of passages in better order than they were on the manuscript.

As soon as the book reaches you, please send me word.

With deepest respect I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agtaa.

[*P. S.*] Conjointly with the volume in question, I am sending you certain manuscript additions which I had prepared for use when the time should arrive for a new edition of the large *Moral*. I now forward them to you, that you may keep them in reserve and put them to use when needed. I have indicated on the additions the places where they belong.

One addition, that treating on *tyrannicde*, agrees with the teaching of Father Patuzzi, of happy memory; the other, relative to the *defence of one's life*, is opposed to the same.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 222.

To the Same.

Precautions with regard to the *Dogmatic Work*, in order to avoid giving umbrage to the civil authorities. The saint sends news concerning the state of his health, refers to a new work he is composing, and announces his resolution to resign the bishopric.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, August 21, 1769.

Most Illustrious Sir: Thanks be to God, I have finished my volume in defence of the dogmas defined by the Council of Trent against the heretics.

The book, entitled: *The Truths of Faith*, is directed principally against atheists, or materialists and deists. In this new work I combat principally the Protestant heretics.

The men of learning who have commenced reading the work, extol it highly; indeed, everybody, I trust, will be pleased with it, for it is an elaborate one, answers being given in a succinct and, at the same time, lucid manner to all the objections of the heretics. In short, the work is almost a complete Dogma. I have joined to it, as you will perceive, two treatises, one [1] of which is placed after session vi., the other [2] at the end of the volume.

This volume contains nothing that might prove a blow to

[1] "On the Manner in which Grace Operates."

[2] "On the Obedience Due to the Definitions of the Council, and, in consequence, to the Roman Catholic Church, Outside of Which there is No Salvation."

the power of princes. The revision of the work was confided, by a special letter of our king, to Canon Simioli, head-professor of theology in the university of Naples, and this for fear that I might have advanced in my book some doctrine prejudicial to the authority of sovereigns.

Rest assured, therefore, that you will not encounter any opposition on this subject at Venice. I have been very careful not to say the least word either in opposition to the power of princes or in favor of the power of the Pope. I understand full well how even the least phrase concerning these two powers is nowadays not to be trusted. It is not safe.

I would, also, inform you that I have had but few copies printed, only two hundred and fifty, that is, a half-ream. From these deduct those which I must present to the censors and to the royal ministers, to the Councillor of State, to the ministers of the royal chamber and to other personages, as well as those which I must bestow on my friends, and very few will remain.

I am forwarding the book through the ordinary channel, I mean through Signor Moschini, and you will, I trust, receive it before long. In the middle of the volume, you will find quite a number of manuscript sheets. They contain useful additions not found in the Neapolitan edition.

As regards my infirmities, I am very much better, thanks be to God, but my legs, are so weak that I can walk but a few steps, supporting myself on the arms of others. My neck is so contorted that I can no longer celebrate Mass. *Fiat voluntas tua!* [Thy will be done!]

Give me some news about your health.

With sentiments of deepest respect I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] One word more. I had at first the intention to send you the manuscript of the work, that you might print the first edition. But I am now much pleased that I had it printed in Naples; for in correcting the proof-sheets I have (by adding and suppressing) changed many things. The Neapolitan edition, therefore, will have for its sole result to bring about a complete and better arranged work. At the same time I found it necessary to prepare quite a number of manuscript additions to which I have already alluded.

I hope the Lord will permit me to live long enough to complete another work which I have commenced, namely *Sermons* for every Sunday in the year [1] and various small treatises that will accompany them.

I am resolved on renouncing my bishopric. The present Pope will be so gracious, I trust, as to accept my renunciation, a thing to which the last Pope would not consent, although I repeatedly supplicated him to that effect.

Together with the above-mentioned volume, I am forwarding you some interesting additions which I was keeping in reserve for the time when you should issue a new edition of the large *Moral*. I now send them. Keep them carefully and ready for use when needed. Should you ever have to reprint the *Compendium of the Italian Moral*, I mean the *Practice*, please inform me, as I have prepared a copy in Italian of the above-mentioned additions, and shall forward it at a word from you.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome,

[1] "Abridged Sermons for Every Sunday in the Year."

LETTER 223.

To Signor Gianfrancesco Paci, a Printer at Naples.

Manner in which the *Sermons* should be printed.—He permits Signor Paci to reprint the ascetical and other works, and promises to help him to obtain the copyright.

Live Jesus and Mary!

ARIENZO, September 28, 1769.

I have received the paged folio, but the columns are too short. I should prefer at least five lines more like the model I sent you, or three more, at least. Correct and arrange the first folio in this manner. The beginning of the *Sermons*, page 8, is not well arranged. Adopt the arrangement I have indicated at that place, and make it resemble in everything that which I have traced on the manuscript. Remark, too, that throughout the work I do not wish any blank spaces in the middle of the pages. Let each line immediately follow the preceding. Change the word *predica* to *sermone*, as I have marked on page 8, and place the titles of the sermons in one column, instead of giving them on one line over two columns.

I send you a new manuscript, forming a copy-book of considerable length, and containing a number of sermons. I am not wasting any leisure moment, but am composing other sermons, though the affairs of my diocese consume much of my time. You will, therefore, be obliged occasionally to discontinue the printing.

Since you desire to reprint my works, I grant you full and entire permission. When I get out a book, I only have a few copies printed. Then, if it is a success, others reprint it. I should especially advise you to be ready to reprint my latest volume, that on the *Council of Trent*. I had only a small number of copies printed, and I am besieged with requests for the work.

I promise you, also, to revise any of my works that you may reprint.

With regard to the *Moral*, it would be best to reprint it in quarto, as this form is more handy for the reader. I earnestly entreated Remondini to publish the work in quarto, but, as you see, he would print it in the present form. I have, moreover, more than one important addition to introduce into the work.

Should you, in view of obtaining the copyright, desire me to give you on a separate sheet the permission to reprint my works, inform me, at the proper time, in what form you would like to have it. I shall send it to you at once.

It would seem the proper thing when reprinting, to make some distinction between the ascetical, or devotional, works, such as the *Visits*, the *Preparation for Death* and the like, and the doctrinal works, such as the book on *Faith* or that on the *Council of Trent*. I case you should ever desire to reprint the *Practice* of the Italian *Moral*, I shall have ready for you many important additions for it.

And now, do as you think best. I salute you with respect. Be careful, with regard to the next folios to send me the first proof-sheets without arranging them into pages, so that I may add thereto or suppress, just as I have a mind.

Your very grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original in the possession of the Marquis Gaetano Ferraiuoli at Rome.

LETTER 224.

To Signor Giambattista Remondini.

He requests the publisher to find out why the large *Moral* was prohibited in Portugal.—Reasons why his System could not have been the cause.—Passage to be suppressed in the *Dogmatic Work on the Council of Trent.*

ARIENZO, October 15, 1769.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have just received your letter of November 26 of last year. It went astray in the mail and was delayed. In it you tell me that you have reprinted the *Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ*, also the Latin *Instruction*, [1] and the *Way of the Cross*. You send me as a present, you say, fifty copies of each of these little works, and two hundred to be sold, all forming a packet forwarded to Signor Oronzio Noe.

I trust, it has not been lost. I shall write this very evening to Signor Noe for news of the books, and, as soon as I receive his reply, I shall send you word and relieve you of all anxiety.

My health is in so miserable a state that, for the greater part of my time, I am obliged to keep my bed. I have all I can do to say Mass.

I have prepared a number of useful additions for the *Homo Apostolicus*. In case you have not yet begun the reprinting of this work, let me know and I shall transmit them to you. Please inform me whether you have already reprinted the volume or not.

From the same letter I learn of the prohibition of my *Moral* in Portugal. I know not what to say about it! The news has given me great pain, especially on account of the

1 "Instruction for the People on the Ten Commandments and the Sacraments."

loss you will suffer. But what can be done? Let us have patience! I had a friend who could be of some service in Portugal, but he is now dead. You might write to your correspondent in Portugal and tell him to try to find out why the work has been prohibited.

The fact of the matter is, I do not follow the System of the Jesuits with regard to Probabilism. They hold to the maxim: *Qui probabiliter agit, prudenter agit;* this maxim I disapprove. They stoutly maintain that a person may embrace the less probable opinion. I deny this, and affirm that when a person knows that the greater probability is in favor of the law, the law must be obeyed.

With regard to particular opinions, I am, indeed, no Rigorist, yet I am more strict than lax, as anyone can perceive from the numerous opinions I reject, opinions that are held as probable by some Jesuit authors, by the theologians of Salamanca, and by a number of religious of other Orders. One need only read, at the beginning of my *Moral*, the list of opinions that I condemn.

If we only knew why the *Moral* has been prohibited! I could then retract, in case there is anything to retract. However, the Neapolitan theologian whom the king appointed censor of books, after carefully examining the whole of my work, both praised and approved it.

Please write me a line on receipt of my new work concerning the Council of Trent. I have despatched this latter to you through Signor Moschini, together with some manuscript additions which you will find enclosed.

Apropos of this volume, cast a glance at page 365, n. 15, *Pietro Soave*. At this place, six lines lower down and after the point, you will read: *Si ammirerà alcuno, etc.* All that follows, together with the words *Si ammirerà*, down to n. 16, it will be well to suppress in your Venetian

edition;[1] for in the passage in question, I prove from certain letters of Soave, who is none other than your Paolo Sarpi, that this writer professed suspicious sentiments in matters of faith. As in Venice they will not permit such an

1 The omission here counselled by St. Alphonsus, was carried into effect by Remondini, as may be seen from the edition cited (the Venetian edition). The same plan has been followed in all subsequent editions down to the present day. Desiring to see this deficiency repaired for the future, we here reproduce the passage as it appeared in the Neapolitan edition, the one which the saint declares in his letter he had sent to Venice, and which was printed the same year by Gianfrancesco Paci.

"People will be astonished that a Catholic, as was Soave, should speak in such a manner against these and other canons of the Council, which are in the domain of matters of faith. But why wonder that he should dare attack the Decrees of the Council, who did not fear to attack the Catholic faith itself, as appears from letters written by Soave to Castrin, a French Huguenot, and published by Cardinal Pallavicini in his 'History of the Council', part i. introd., chap. 2, page 4? These letters were intercepted by Roberto Ubaldini, Papal Nuncio at the court of France, and were transmitted to Paul V,, who left a note on the subject written in his own handwriting, a note seen by Cardinal Pallavicini. In one letter dated April 13, 1611, Soave expressed himself in these terms: '*I should be pleased to know whether the queen favors Condé, also whether there is any hope that the reformed may obtain some great advantage in the cause of religion; for it is to that I am above all aiming, being persuaded that it will serve to bring the Gospel into Italy.*' In another letter, of December 21, 1610, he says: '*Sully's continuance in power pleases me exceedingly, on account of the benefits in the way of assistance which may accrue therefrom to the reformed. The Huguenots must needs be respected, and they will do well never to cease their demands in this respect, above all, for the reason that whatever shall be done in their favor, will be for the service of God and the interests of the king.*' Cardinal Pallavicini, also mentions (in the passage cited, page 5) what had been written to him by M. De Lyonne, the celebrated minister of the Most Christian King, Louis XIV., namely: 'The

accusation, it would be better to suppress the passage, and thus not place the entire volume in jeopardy, in case you desire to reprint it.

Refer also to page 17, n. 26. There you read: *It is objected to the Book of Tobias: 1° that this Book is not found in the canon of the Jews; but in answer, etc.* In place of the words: *but in answer, etc.* you should insert: *but answer has been already made at n. 24 that Esdras, etc.*, and then the rest just as it stands.

Furthermore, at page 40, n. 8, on the second line, these words occur: *There are three opinions.* This should be: *There are many opinions.*

I conclude, subscribing myself, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

Sieur Sommerdit having been sent by the Dutch, as ambassador to Venice, Soave's native country, the latter made use of these words: '*I am extremely gratified to have lived long enough to behold in my mother country a representative of that government which recognizes, as I do, that the Roman Pontiff is Antichrist.*'"

The text of St. Alphonsus continues thus:

"16. Ma rispondiamo, etc."

LETTER 225.

To the Same.

Passage to be suppressed in the *Dogmatic Work on the Council of Trent.*—Important additions to be introduced into the third edition of the *Homo Apostolicus.*

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, November 2, 1769.

Most Illustrious Sir: I am pleased to learn that you have received my book on the *Council of Trent.* I should have wished that before submitting it to the magistrate for examination, you had suppressed or cancelled the paragraph at page 356, that is to say, the entire n. 15; for in that passage I handle Pietro Soave, your Paolo Sarpi, quite roughly and declare that he is guilty of suspicious sentiments in matters of faith. Still, they may allow this to pass, since I do not name Sarpi; I mention only Pietro Soave. If they do call for the suppression of this entire n. 15, strike it out; it matters little.

I have learned, also, with pleasure that you have received the additions destined for the *Moral.* You can use them at the proper time.

I assure you, I am busily engaged upon the *Homo Apostolicus.* I regret that the affairs of my diocese do not permit me to write, and that I have very few to assist me in writing. My secretary attends to the correspondence and other business of the diocese, and the lay-brother [1] of the Congregation, who is the head of my household, can be of little service, on account of the duties with which he is charged. When I resided in the Congregation, I had a number of young men to assist me. I shall, however, strive to finish the additions as quickly as possible. Meantime, do not fail to delay the printing until

[1] Brother Francesco Antonio Romito.

you get the additions, especially as this *Homo Apostolicus* has met a very favorable reception even here in the kingdom. The edition, it seems, has been entirely exhausted.

The printing of the volume of *Sermons* has been commenced. Some time, however, will elapse before it is completed.

Signor Oronzio Noe has written to me announcing the receipt of the books. I shall procure them from him.

I requested you in a former letter to represent to your correspondent in Portugal the injustice committed by prohibiting my *Moral.* The truth is, I combat the doctrines of the Jesuits, as I mentioned to you in the letter in question. Your correspondent should, I wrote, speak to the authorities about the matter, and, in case he needs a letter in my own hand, I shall write one to justify myself.

Nothing further. Once more I subscribe myself, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] I continue lame. When walking I have to lean on another. Still, thanks be to God, my head is clear, and I manage to work seven or eight hours a day.

One word more. Among the manuscripts which I forwarded to you with the *Council of Trent*, there is one folio in which I have treated of two questions relating to the fifth commandment, the subject being homicide.

The first is this: Whether it is allowed to kill a prince who exercises his power in a tyrannical manner. I have maintained (in opposition to the opinion of several) that this is not allowed, even though the prince had unjustly usurped the throne, and desired unjustly to continue in possession of it. My opinion cannot fail to be very agreeable to princes. All monarchs will gladly welcome it.

The second question is: Whether it is allowed to kill an unjust aggressor. I affirm, and every writer is in accord with my opinion, that it is allowed. Father Patuzzi would deny this, but his opinion is extravagant.

Preserve the sheet of which I speak. I shall thus be saved the necessity of re-copying and sending it to you when it is time to insert it in the *Homo Apostolicus*. Later I shall send the indication of the place to which the two questions belong; *later*, I say, that is when I shall forward to you the other additions. Amongst the latter you will find a dissertation on *Probabilism*, for that now contained in the *Homo Apostolicus* does not please me. The new one that I shall send, will be much better arranged. I am now putting the finishing touches to it.[1]

After the original preserved at the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 226.

To the Same.

New dissertation on *Probabilism* to be inserted in the third edition of the *Homo Apostolicus*.—The saint's affliction on account of the suppression of his *Moral* in Portugal.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

[ARIENZO, November, 1769.]

Most Illustrious Sir: In my last letter I informed you that I was preparing some additions I wished to send you

[1] This addition is the Latin translation of the "Defence of Moral Theology, Accused by Some as Being Lax, as Embracing the Lax System of Probabilism, and, in particular, the Less Probable Opinion." This was inserted in the third edition of the "Homo Apostolicus".

for the *Homo Apostolicus*. I now write to inform you that they are almost finished and will soon be ready.

Have patience, I pray you, for the little time I yet require, as these additions are very important. I found it necessary, in particular, to rewrite the entire dissertation on *Probabilism*, as the one already contained in the *Homo Apostolicus*, having preceded the controversy with Father Patuzzi, lacked the strongest and most cogent arguments. I have carefully selected such points as were indispensable to the subject, and sought to condense them as much as possible. This abridgment is, nevertheless, more lengthy than the preceding.

I shall endeavor to finish the dissertation as quickly as possible, and shall then forward it to you through Signor Moschini. Please write to that gentleman to send you my manuscript as soon as he receives it, and to take every precaution regarding it. I should be very sorry to have it go astray. I should then be obliged to undertake the task anew, in the poor condition in which I now find myself. I can no longer work as formerly.

Once more I recommend to you to preserve carefully the manuscripts I sent you with the volume on the *Council of Trent*, and I call your attention to two in particular that are to be inserted in the *Homo Apostolicus*.

I am still much depressed over the proscription of my *Moral* in Portugal, ignorant as I am of the reason for the prohibition. Have the kindness, I pray you, in case you receive any further news from that country, to communicate it to me. I should like to do something to aid my cause there; but I know not what steps to take, and I see that just now all measures would prove futile, as the discord between the court of Portugal and that of Rome is rag-

ing more fiercely than ever. I shall wait till God grants a favorable moment.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 227.

To the Same.

He requests the publisher to defer the printing of the *Homo Apostolicus*.—Recommendation relative to the work on the *Council of Trent*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, November 20, 1769.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have just received your last favor of November 4, and with regret I learn that you have begun ahead of time the printing of the *Homo Apostolicus*. I say: *with regret*, for I am at this moment engaged in finishing the additions (indeed, they are already completed, nothing remaining but to revise them). Among them there is one I may mention in particular, the most important of all, which I was obliged to rewrite entirely, the dissertation which it replaces being written in the old style and with the ancient terminology. Now, then, if the *Homo Apostolicus* were to appear at this moment, it would almost contradict what I have inserted in the latest edition of the large *Moral*. It was on that account I was constrained to undertake a double task in rewriting the dissertation or study on the

question of probable opinions. You will see, then, how much concerned I am in having the dissertation, that I mentioned, changed and my new work substituted in its place. I regret that the dissertation belongs at the beginning, in the first treatise, *De Conscientia;* that was the reason why in a preceding letter I entreated you by all means to suspend the printing until the arrival of my additions. I now renew my entreaty, to the end that the work may be really a perfect one.

I have written to Puglia, to Signor Oronzio Noe, asking for the packet (you know to which one I allude). He had informed me of its being in his possession. As soon as I receive it, I shall send you word.

I am working hard trying to finish my book of [*Abridged*] *Sermons.* At the end of the volume, after the Sermons, I intend to add several very useful little treatises.

With regard to Portugal, patience!

I now come to speak of my volume on the *Council of Trent.* The Neapolitan magistracy at first suspected that the work might contain some passage opposed to the rights of the king. Thanks be to God, however, they were convinced that there was nothing of the kind therein; indeed, I was very careful to avoid speaking on that subject. I trust, they will be persuaded of the same thing at Venice.

There is only this, that at Venice some one may take umbrage at the note I appended to session xxiv. n. 15, in which I make mention of the suspicious sentiments held by Pietro Soave in matters of faith. It was for that reason I wrote to you in a preceding letter that the passage in question, and I cited the place, might be suppressed. Notice that I refer only to my remarks concerning the suspicious sentiments entertained by Soave. This suppression would be of no consequence to the work, and the sense would remain the same.

Some time next week, I hope to send you the additions without fail. They have cost me very great labor, I assure you.

I am, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 228.

To the Same.

Despatch of the additions destined for the *Homo Apostolicus*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, November 26, 1769.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have, at last, completed the manuscript copies of the additions. They are a little lengthy, but are all important. This very evening I shall transmit them to Naples, and have them consigned to Signor Moschini.

Accompanying the manuscripts and in the same bundle, you will receive a letter relative to the additions and, also, to the sale of all the copies of other books which you formerly sent me. As I have lost Father Ferrara, I have no means of disposing of these works. When you have read the letter in question, please send word what you desire me to do in the matter.

At the beginning of the additions, I have noted down some remarks intended for the compositor and the proof-reader. The latter should be a man of experience, and should attend carefully to the correction; especially as the writing of the person that copied the additions is a little

difficult to read. If the proof-reader is not skilled in his business, the work will teem with mistakes, since it is not an easy thing for compositors to understand Latin well. It devolves upon the proof-reader, therefore, to correct all blunders that the compositors may make.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 229.

To the Same.

The same subject.—The saint finds it impossible to procure the sale of the books printed by Remondini.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

[ARIENZO, November 26, 1769.]

Most Illustrious Sir: I send you the additions destined for the *Homo Apostolicus*.

Have the three first folios read to the compositor and the proof-reader. They are written in different handwriting, and are found just preceding the lengthy dissertation on *Probabilism*. They contain divers instructions for both these persons. The principal warning, however, to be given for such a work, is that the compositor be very careful with the printing, as the handwriting is a little difficult to read. As it is in Latin, the compositor not being well versed in that language, will make many mistakes, and these the proof-reader must be very clever in correcting. He should be especially attentive to the punctuation, also to the capitals and small letters.

The work will prove very useful for all classes, and

especially for seminaries; but to produce this result, the printing must be as correct as possible. You are a man of judgment, so to your judgment I commit myself.

With regard to the packet that Signor Oronzio announced to me as being in his possession, I have written to him to send it; but I have not yet received it.

You have written to me, I recollect, that you were despatching a great number of copies of the *Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ*, also of the Latin *Instruction*[1] for me to dispose of. I must inform you, however, that it would be very difficult for me to sell these books. My priests have already purchased the Italian *Instruction*, as they prefer it to the Latin. As to the *Practice*, the task is no less difficult, my priests having little love for books. Speaking in general of books, I may say, that when Father Ferrara was living, he charged himself with the duty of selling them in various countries; now, however, I have no one who possesses his ability or who wishes to undertake this task. My idea with regard to the books you sent me both lately and some time ago, and which I have had kept in a safe place at Naples, is that they should be consigned to some bookseller of the capital with the request, that he sell them as best he can. If this be not done, I am afraid they will become the prey of mice and moths.

Please inform me what you desire me to do, for I should like to oblige you to the best of my power; but I know not what measures to take, especially in the miserable state to which I am now reduced, paralyzed and confined to my bed.

The best thing would be to find some bookseller who would buy all the copies that are well preserved; for who would be willing to collect the price of every copy sold at Naples? If you have any friend among the booksellers of Naples, let me know, and I shall consign all the copies to him. I repeat, I am very much embarrassed on the

[1] "Instruction for the People."

subject of these books. Tell me what I should do, for I am desirous to have you suffer no loss.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 230.

To the Same.

He renews a recommendation relative to the third edition of the *Homo Apostolicus*.—Points of difference between the doctrine of the saint and that of the Jesuits.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, December 9, 1769.

Most Illustrious Sir: Several days ago I despatched to you through Signor Moschini the folios of the additions destined for the *Homo Apostolicus*. You will have received them, I trust, by the time this reaches you. Once more I recommend to you to see that the proof-reader be very careful; else the volume will abound with mistakes, and, on that very account, will meet with an unfavorable reception.

It is true, the government gave orders that my work on the *Council* be submitted to examination. This was done not so much because I was a friend of the Jesuits, as because they feared I might have written something opposed to the power of princes, since in my book *on Faith*, I defended at length the supreme power of the Pope. The work has, however, passed through the hands of the censors, who have been unable to discover the shadow of a pretext for its suppression; indeed, I was very circumspect on this subject of the royal power and the power of the Pope.

I have not yet received the packet, the person whom I had charged to procure it being absent.

The volume of *Sermons* is progressing. Still, I need a good deal of time to complete it, for I am inserting after the sermons four other small treatises bearing on very useful subjects.

With regard to Portugal, let us have patience! May God make them saints! Still, if the affairs of that kingdom with Rome were settled, there might be some hope.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] You must know, and I beg you to tell the same to everybody, that in my work on the *Council of Trent*, I am not favorable to the scholastic teaching of the Jesuits. They fight tooth and nail for the *scientia media*, while I combat the same *ex professo*.

Furthermore, in my work, I disagree with the Jesuits not only on scholastic teaching, but also on Moral; for the Jesuits commonly maintain that a person may follow the *less probable* opinion. Whereas I hold, and the Jesuits have addressed complaints to me on the point, that if a person knows that the opinion in favor of the law is *more probable*, he should follow it, and he is not allowed to follow the *less probable* opinion. This point especially I have set forth in clear light and more at length in the addition [1] I sent you destined for the *Treatise on Conscience*, for the place in which I speak of the *Probable Opinion*. I have had this little treatise printed here separately and in Italian [2] (I have now translated the same into Latin) to show that I have not, in my *Moral*, adopted the teaching of the Jesuits, as some lay to my charge. Publish this everywhere.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

[1] Addition destined for the "Homo Apostolicus".

[2] "Defence of Moral Theology Accused, etc." See Letter 225.

LETTER 231.

To the Same.

More about the volume on the *Council of Trent.*—Fresh recommendations relative to the printing of the *Homo Apostolicus.*

ARIENZO, December 14, 1769.

Most Illustrious Sir: I announced to you last week that the additions had been despatched to you by Signor Moschini, as he himself certified to me. With God's help, I trust they will not go astray, and that the rains will not damage them. I should be very sorry to be obliged to begin anew a task which the deplorable state of my health has rendered very painful.

With regard to the book on the *Council of Trent*, I informed you in my last letter that the government had, indeed, ordered an examination of the work, but had discovered in it nothing to call for suppression. Since that letter was written, I have learned that the special report made to the court declared my work perfectly innocent. Print the book, therefore, with confidence; there is no danger to fear. Meanwhile, my book is safe and sound, and is in constant demand.

The packet of books arrived here to-day from Manfredonia, and I had to disburse a good sum of money to recover them, there being two bundles of printed volumes. I have not yet opened them.

Once more, thanks for the copies you have presented to me. I have kept the letter you sent to me on this subject.

As to the other copies, I shall endeavor to sell them as best I can. Confined as I am to my bed, and no longer having Father Ferrara, I know not what to do to procure their sale. But enough. I shall do all that I can. I think, however, it will be quite difficult to dispose of all the

Latin *Instructions* at this place, as the Italian are preferred to them.

I have read the note from Portugal concerning my *Moral.* Let us be satisfied that fifty-four copies have been sold. However, I cannot understand how or why my *Moral* could be prohibited, since I am opposed to the principal doctrines taught by the Jesuits, as I mentioned to you in my last letter.

Forgive me for renewing for the third or fourth time my recommendations relative to the proof-reader of the additions destined for the *Homo Apostolicus.* I insist so much on this point, because these additions are written in a handwriting difficult to decipher. If the proof-reader is not extremely careful, or if he does not understand Latin, the work will be filled with mistakes.

Have the goodness to send me word as soon as you receive the additions.

With deepest respect I subscribe myself, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 232.

To the Same.

Gratification at the news that the printing of the *Homo Apostolicus* has been deferred.—Details concerning the *Sermons for Sundays.*—He proposes to publish a *History of the Heresies.*

ARIENZO, December 24, 1769.

Most Illustrious Sir: Yesterday I received your last letter, dated the 9th instant, and I was much pleased to learn that you will delay the printing until you have received the

additions. You must have a little patience, however, for only yesterday Signor Moschini announced that he had not yet despatched to you the manuscript copies of the additions, as he was waiting for a favorable occasion, which he will soon have. I was much disappointed at this news, knowing, as I do, your anxiety to hasten the printing. However, we must have patience, seeing that we are so far from each other. If we were neighbors, I would have sent the manuscript by express, as I, too, am very anxious to have this new edition a perfect one. God alone knows when another will appear.

With much regret I learned that the work was in course of printing; for I feared you might have already begun to print the part containing the little treatise on the *Probable Opinion*. The treatise contained in the preceding edition is no longer of any use. It has put on a clearer, more attractive, and more complete form, and no small amount of labor has been expended in translating it into Latin, the original having been composed by me in Italian. I beg you by all means not to fail to print it when it reaches you. At this season the forwarding of such writings is always very difficult, on account of the stormy weather. Tell those who are asking for the work to be patient for a short time, if they really desire to have a perfect work, such as my additions will make it.

In my last letter I informed you that I had received from Manfredonia the packet of books. The expenses for transportation were considerable.

A word regarding the volume on the *Council*. I have been informed that the report, sealed officially, has been sent to the court, and that it declares my work altogether blameless and containing nothing objectionable.

The printing of the book of *Sunday Sermons* goes on. With God's help, I trust it will prove acceptable to all. The sermons are short, but full of substance. Each one costs me fifteen days' labor when I happen to be disengaged. When, however, I am busy with the affairs of my diocese, I need more time. The 37th sermon is already completed, and I have only seventeen more to write. I trust that God will grant me time to finish them.

I am thinking of composing another very useful book after this work is finished. I know not, however, whether I shall have time to bring it to a conclusion, as the labor is considerable; yet the volume would be a great success. I am thinking of writing the *History of the Heresies*, not, however, at great length, as some authors have done, notably Bernini. My book will not be larger, I think, than the volume *on Faith*, though I shall give a *résumé* of the most celebrated heresies, such as those of Arius, Nestorius, Eutyches, Montanus, and the like. Of other short-lived heresies I shall give merely an idea. In describing the more celebrated, no writer has portrayed them as I have. I put under contribution not only ancient writers of history, but also modern historians, such as Fleury, Orsi, Bernini, etc. I have already begun to note down points, that they may not escape my memory.

Requests for a complete edition of my ascetical works continue to come to me. But you alone can issue this complete edition. It would suffice if you were to unite the works that have met greater success and greater sale; such as, the *Book for Nuns*, the *Retreat for Priests*, the *Novena for Christmas*, the *Preparation for Death*, the *Glories of Mary*, the *Way of Salvation*, the work *on Prayer*, the *Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ*. The *Truths of Faith*

and the book on the *Council* you should not insert, as they are not ascetical works.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 233.

To the Same.

He informs him of the despatch from Naples of the additions destined for the *Homo Apostolicus*.—The *History of the Heresies*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, [January] 19, 1770.

Most Illustrious Sir: Signor Moschini, whom I have been continually urging, has this day informed me that he sent you a few days ago, *via* Rome, my manuscripts relative to the *Homo Apostolicus*. I trust, you will have received them before this reaches you.

Acknowledge the receipt of them, I beg you, and thus relieve my anxiety. I should be much distressed if they went astray and I were constrained to rewrite them. They have cost me great labor; in fact, I may say double the usual amount, by reason of the infirmity with which I am afflicted.

I enclose a short addition for the *Homo Apostolicus*. Have it inserted where it belongs, that is, toward the end of the book; consequently, I presume you will receive it in time.

I am now completing my collection of *Sermons*, after which I shall begin work on the *History of the Heresies*, as

I signified to you. The Lord must grant me health and strength. If I realize my plan, this work will be altogether unique, one desired by all, as none like it has yet been undertaken.

With sentiments of profound respect I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 234.

To the Same.

He asks for information of the arrival of the additions for the *Homo Apostolicus*. — Divers details.—News about his health.

ARIENZO, February 15, 1770.

Most Illustrious Sir: Hardly had I received your favor of the 22d ult., than I wrote to my agent at Naples, instructing him to ask Signor Moschini for an account of the additions intended for the *Homo Apostolicus*, which had been consigned to him and which, you informed me, had never reached you. The agent sent reply that Signor Moschini acknowledged having received them some time previously, but declared that he had in turn despatched them to Rome to his correspondent there, with the request to forward them to you. By this date, therefore, you must surely have received them, and I await your acknowledgment to that effect. I was pleased to learn that the reprinting of the work had been suspended, in order that the additions might be inserted at their proper places.

I am gratified, also, that you intend to undertake the printing of the complete collection of my ascetical writings.

You will accord me this consolation, I trust, before God calls me to himself.

I shall do my utmost to have sold, as advantageously as possible, all the printed books issued from your establishment and now in my keeping. Rest assured, everything that can be done, will be done, and you will receive a detailed account of all transactions.

The *Sermons for Sundays* I have almost completed; but I am thinking of adding at the end certain other useful matter, and thus make the volume more complete.

Thanks be to God, my head is in good condition, but the half of my body is paralyzed. Blessed be God who permits all this for his own glory and for the good of my soul! I am consoled to hear that you are well. With deepest respect I subscribe myself, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 235.

To the Same.

He announces that he will soon send the book of *Sermons*. —Care of the author in correcting the Neapolitan edition of this work.

ARIENZO, March 16, 1770.

By this time, I trust, you will have received my additions for the *Homo Apostolicus*. Please send me an acknowledgment of their receipt.

The printing of the *Sunday Sermons* is completed. You may, therefore, write to Signor Moschini to forward the work to you at once; for he is most uncivil to my agent, and pays little heed to his requests.

This book of *Sunday Sermons* which I am sending to you, is thoroughly revised and amended. I have collated all the citations with their sources, as I discovered an immense number of errors on the printed copy. You would do well, therefore, to state on the title-page of the volume: *Greatly improved and corrected by the Author.*

Having nothing further to add, I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 236.

To the Same.

Important addition to be inserted in the *Homo Apostolicus*.—Method pursued for the *History of the Heresies*.

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, April 8, 1770.

Most Illustrious Sir: I thought I had already sent you the enclosed addition for the *Homo Apostolicus*, which belongs to the third part of the work; but on examining my copies of the manuscripts despatched, I was unable to discover this one among them. I am, therefore, in doubt as to whether I forwarded it or not, and what troubles me most is the fact, that the addition in question bears on a very important point regarding the jurisdiction of bishops. If, then, it should reach you too late, because the part to which it belongs has been already printed, I would request you to insert it on a special sheet, at the end of the work, with this introduction: "*Advertendum quod in tract. xx. de Privil. cap. iii. num. 36, dixi cum Diana, ibi in fine, prorsus non posse episcopum absolvere ab excommu[illegible]*-

tione Pontifici reservata, virtute facultatis episcopis concessæ a Concilio Tridentino in cap. Liceat 6, sess. xxiv. quantumvis casus fuerit occultus, si in Bulla reservationis adsit clausula: a qua, præterquam a Romano Pontifice, nisi in mortis articulo, absolvi nequeant. Sed re maturius perpensa, inveni id communius ab aliis non approbari. Quapropter hic expono ambas sententias quæ adsunt super hoc punctum. Dubitatum fuit an, etc." After these words *Dubitatum fuit* continue the rest just as you find it on the page I sent.

It may be, I have already sent you this addition, in fact, I believe I did; but if, perchance, I have not done so, I beg you to insert this slip, or, at least, to place at the end of the work the *Advertendum* just given.

My book of *Sermons* and other small treatises is progressing very well, all the former being finished. I am now engaged on some instructive little treatises that I desire to add to it. I am arranging, also, in their proper places the short additions with which I am enriching the sermons. Once the work is completed, I shall, rest assured, despatch it to you without delay.

I have already commenced the *Abridged History of the Heresies*, a book that will excite universal applause, I think. It is not so lengthy as other publications of the kind, which embrace one or more large tomes. It will hardly require two octavo volumes, just like my book *on Faith*, or the one on the *Council*. Again, it will not be so short as the works of some other writers, who barely skim their subject. In the concise style habitual to me, I shall recount all the more noteworthy facts, drawing for this purpose upon the latest authors that have written on these subjects, such as Baronius, Fleury, Natalis Alexander, Orsi, Graveson, Bernini, Hermant, Berti, Gotti, and others. The Lord will have to grant me time and strength, if he wills this

work from me; for though I have already completed a part of the volume, much further labor will be required.

I remain, as ever, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 237.

To a Religious in the Service of the Grand Almoner.

He requests a reasonable censor for the *History of the Heresies.*

Live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

ARIENZO, April 12, 1770.

Very Reverend and Honored Father: I have the honor to inform you that I have forwarded to the civil authority a petition to authorize the publication of a new book I am now engaged upon, namely, an *Abridged History of the Heresies.*

I would request your Reverence, when this petition reaches you, to assign to me a censor other than the one at present inspecting my book of *Sermons.* He is altogether too captious. With a mind full of chimerical suppositions, he imagines he sees dark mysteries in the most inoffensive things, although I am ever on the alert not to do the least injury to the rights of the king.[1] It may happen that the

[1] One can hardly form an idea of the incredible susceptibility with which officials sought everywhere to discover attacks on the rights of the crown. The historian of St. Alphonsus relates the following incident, which happened in the year 1748, and which may

king himself will assign to me for censor Canon Simioli. He, being a very busy man, takes a long time to examine a book; but he is judicious and reasonable.

If, however, Simioli be not assigned for the work, I would entreat your Reverence to appoint as censor some one more humane than the person of whom I have spoken.

I thank you for having intervened in my favor with the present censor, and for having induced him to cease hunting after difficulties. Please recommend to him to examine the rest of the work quickly, for he is still at the first pages only, I am told.

give us an inkling of the trials the saint had to endure on this point:

"One day, when speaking of the extreme goodness shown by our Saviour in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar, the saint made use of the following words of St. Teresa: 'It is not thus with the kings of the earth. They give audience only a few times during the year, and how much it costs one to obtain it! And then no one can speak as he would wish to do, nor with the same confidence with which all can address themselves to Jesus Christ in this sacrament at every moment. There we may all speak to him as a friend to his friend, and expose our wants to him with the utmost confidence.' Who would imagine that these words of St. Teresa, so simple in their meaning, could be construed into an insult to the king? All Naples knew the respect Alphonsus bore to his sovereign. Yet there was one person present, an enemy certainly of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, and who, thinking to ingratiate himself with his Majesty, added to these words all that his wickedness could suggest, and denounced Alphonsus as a man discontented with the king, and who wished to represent him as difficult of access to his subjects. The accusation was listened to by Marquis Tanucci, who, being a stranger, was unacquainted with the integrity of Alphonsus, and threatened to banish him from Naples. It needed the intervention of Cardinal Spinelli and the Marquis Brancone to smooth over the affair."—*Tannoia*, "Life of St. Alphonsus", vol. i. book ii. chap. xxix.

I commend myself to your prayers, and I shall be very happy to render you any service in my power.

I subscribe myself, Very Reverend Father,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the domestic chapel of Canon de Rosa.

LETTER 238.

To Signor Giambattista Remondini.

He asks for information concerning the censorship of the *Dogmatic Work on the Council of Trent.*—Details concerning the *History of the Heresies.*

ARIENZO, April 20, 1770.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have received your letter assuring me that the additions have come to hand, and that they have been inserted at their respective places. This news has afforded me deep joy.

With pleasure, also, have I learned that you have written to Signor Moschini concerning my book of *Sermons.* The printing of this work is almost completed; when finished, I shall forward it to you together with all the additions that are to be introduced into the text. In the copy I intend to send, I shall insert these additions each at the place in which it belongs. Rest assured they will give to the *Sermons* a higher value than the Neapolitan edition possesses; for since the appearance of the work at Naples, I have been enabled to consult a number of works of the same kind.

I should like to know whether my volume on the *Council* has been approved by the censors at Venice or not. In

Naples, as I mentioned to you before, my book had been denounced to the court as containing suspicious teaching; however, after having been subjected to the severe examination by one of the ministers, the unfortunate work escaped harm. It may be that in Venice it will meet with some opposition from the censors, seeing that I do not speak very favorably of your much revered Pietro Soave; however, I have already written to you that in case the censors will not allow this part of the text to pass, you may suppress the entire passage in which I fail to praise Soave in regard to matters of faith. At Naples the volume is selling rapidly. I have hardly a copy left for myself. Please inform me whether or not it is approved by the censors.

Once the volume of *Sermons* is completed together with the four little works [1] accompanying it (which have become rare and which formerly met with great success: in fact, I have already begun to hear their praises sounded), I shall begin to print the *History of the Heresies*, of which work I have already written to you in my last.

This latter volume is one that will occupy a unique position among all works of its class; it will form two volumes in octavo. I must, however, have time and health, as it is a great task to read the numerous books I must of necessity examine, and especially the modern critical writers of repute.

[1] The following are the works referred to: 1. "Letter to a Friend, a Religious, on the Apostolic Manner of Preaching. 2. "Letter to a New Bishop on the Immense Spiritual Benefit conferred on the Faithful by the Holy Missions." 3. "Letter to a Young Student Deliberating on the Choice of a State of Life." "Advice relative to the Religious Vocation", "Considerations intended for Persons Called to the Religious State", "Encouragement for Novices to Persevere in their Vocation." 4. "Sermon for the Feast of St. Joseph." "Sermon for the Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin." "Sermon on the Dolors of Mary, for the Friday in Passion Week."

Many authors, such as Natalis Alexander, Fleury, Orsi, Hermant, Baronius, Pagi, etc. treat at length of the heresies, but in divers places. They are writing either a universal history, or they give the history of the Councils in a general manner; and on that account, they treat of the heresies according to their progress in the different centuries. My aim, on the contrary, and my labor consist in collecting into one single chapter an account of the beginning and progress of each heresy. I cannot discover any writer who has done the same, save the authors of certain small works, for example, Berti, Van Ranst, Danes, etc. They, however, merely touch upon the subject, and then pass on. You perceive, then, why I call mine a unique work (that is, if I ever succeed in finishing it, for death is beckoning to me). May God bring it to a happy conclusion.

A further difficulty arises from the fact, that in these days I must use great circumspection when writing, so as to avoid having the book suppressed. You understand me.

I remain, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

LETTER 239.

To a Religious in the Service of the Grand Almoner.

He requests him to have appointed for the *History of the Heresies* a censor other than the one nominated.

ARIENZO, May 3, 1770.

Very Reverend and Honored Father: The printer has written to me that a note has been addressed from the palace

to Monsignor, the Grand Almoner, directing him to confide the examination of my work on *Heresies* to a royal censor. He tells me, furthermore, that Monsignor having assigned for this duty Signor Giordano, you engaged yourself to have some one else nominated in his stead.

Have the goodness, I entreat you, to render me this service, for Signor Giordano does nothing but passionately contradict me. With him as censor, I should have to suffer great annoyance. I beg you, then, by the bonds of our friendship, to have Signor Giordano's appointment changed, and Canon Simioli assigned in his place. You have now an opportunity of singularly obliging me.

I place implicit trust in your kindness, and with deepest respect I subscribe myself, Reverend Father,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved at Naples in the domestic chapel of Canon de Rosa.

LETTER 240.

To Signor Giambattista Remondinini.

He announces the arrival of a packet of books, and makes mention of one or two works he intends soon to despatch.

[ARIENZO, middle of November, 1770.]

Most Illustrious Sir: I have just received a letter from Manfredonia from Signor Noe, announcing that he has received the packet of books (you know to which one I allude). I at once wrote to my confrères to secure the bundle, defray all expenses, and send it on to me so that I might commence the sale at once.

They have, at last, begun to give me hope that I shall soon behold my volume of *Sermons* liberated from captivi-

ty.[1] Rest assured, as soon as the notice of permission has appeared, I shall send you a copy which I arranged, corrected, and enlarged some time ago, and which I have set aside in a small box. You need have no fear, therefore; you will certainly receive it.

My other book, I mean the *History of the Heresies and Refutation of False Teaching*, is in press, and the printing advancing. I hope to see the volume finished in a short time. I shall then forward it to you for reprinting. You will be glad to undertake this, I trust, for many are impatiently waiting for the work, and I am having printed only a small number of copies.

I wish you good health, and I pledge myself ready to render you any service in my power.

I subscribe myself, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,

Bishop of Sant' Agata.

[*P. S.*] My secretary Felice[2] recommends to you the enclosed letter.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

1 For more than a year this book failed to see the light of day, having been denounced to the Secretary of State as containing theories injurious to the sovereign. We have seen above (Letter 237) what must be thought of this accusation.

2 The priest Don Felice Verzella.

LETTER 241.

To the Same.

Recommendations relative to the forwarding of books.—Good news regarding the *Sermons*.

ARIENZO, December 22, 1770.

Most Illustrious Sir: I have just received your favor of the 8th instant, announcing to me the despatch of a packet containing the three volumes that have appeared of the *Moral* of Father Patuzzi, and the work of Ferraris (the latter destined for my secretary Don Felice Verzella).

I have already written to Manfredonia, and requested Signor Noe to inform me of the arrival of these books. But next time, I pray you to tell Signor Noe to send me word as soon as he receives these printed works. In that way, I shall be enabled to have them procured without delay, and thus no time will be lost.

Lately, I sent you another request, namely, that whenever you were forwarding a certain number of printed volumes, you should send them in several bundles and never in one single packet. They can thus be easily conveyed by the pack-horses, and will not run the risk of being opened and spoiled by inexperienced persons.

I, also, mentioned to you that I had received the printed works (you know which ones I mean). I have them in my keeping, and I shall soon have a number of them bound for sale.

I hope to obtain before long the royal *Placet* for my volume of *Sermons*. It is true, no council of state has been held, his Majesty the king being in the country. I am assured, however, that the permission will shortly appear, and I shall then have the pleasure of sending you the work.

My secretary is busy at this moment writing the additions on another copy, which I shall have translated into Latin.[1]

God grant you health! I pledge myself ready for any service you may command, and with sentiments of deepest esteem I subscribe myself, Illustrious Sir,

Your very devoted and grateful servant,

ALFONSO MARIA,
Bishop of Sant' Agata.

After the original preserved in the archives of Father General at Rome.

[1] We do not know whether this translation was ever made. One thing is certain, it was never printed.